

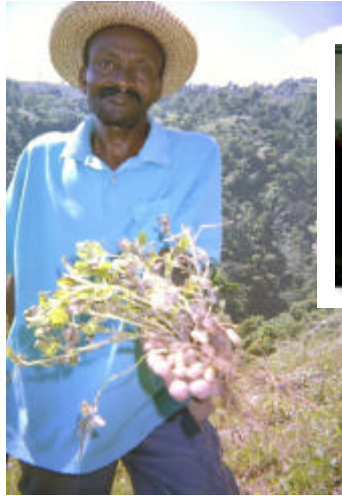
John Ogonowski

FARMER-TO-FARMER EVALUATION

Haitian Peanut Farmer

Azerbaijan Tea Factory

Armenia Sausage Plant



THE NEXT STEP:

Building on Success

MOPAG COOP Member--Haiti

Prepared by:

Lance H. Jepson
Dr. Rodney Fink
Anthony Johnson
Elon Gilbert
Ira "Buck" Richards
Eric Benschoter
Bill Maltby



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ACRONYMS

ACDI/VOCA	Agricultural Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
BIFAD	Board for International Food and Agricultural Development
BHR	Bureau for Humanitarian Response
CAR	Central Asia Republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Stan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan)
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CNFA	Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs
CRSPS	Collaborative Research Support Program
DCHA	Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
EGAT	Economic Growth Agriculture and Trade Bureau
FAMU	Florida A & M University
FtF	Farmer-to-Farmer Program
FSC	Federation of Southern Cooperatives
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HSI	Hispanic Serving Institutions
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
LOL	Land O'Lakes
ME & I	Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment
MSI	Minority Serving Institutions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIS	Newly Independent States of the Former Soviet Union
OICI	Opportunities Industrialization Centers International
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
POA	Partners of the Americas
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RFA	Request for Applications
SOW	Scope of Work
TA	Technical Assistance
TCU	Tribal Colleges and Universities
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/W	United States Agency for International Development/Washington
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
WW	Worldwide Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The U.S. Congress authorized the Worldwide Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF) Program in 1985 as part of the Agricultural Development and Trade Act. It was based on the transfer of knowledge and expertise of the United States agricultural producers and businesses to middle-income countries and emerging democracies, on a people-to-people basis, to such countries while enhancing the democratic process by supporting private and public agriculturally related organizations.

The NIS Program was initiated in 1991, as a three-year, \$30 million Special Initiative of the Farmer-To-Farmer (FtF) Program. It was authorized as one of the first USG assistance programs for the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union (NIS). The overall objectives of the NIS-FtF Program are to “increase food availability to the consumers in the near term, take steps to ensure against future food shortages and distribution problems, and facilitate an orderly transition to a free-market economy.” Both programs are funded from PL 480 legislation and have been authorized for funding until the end of FY 2003.

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program in recent years has been administratively divided into two portfolios: the Worldwide and the Newly Independent States (NIS) of the Former Soviet Union. The former covers designated countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia. The NIS activity covers Russia, Ukraine, The Caucuses, the Central Asian Republics, Moldova and Belarus. The new FY 2002 Farm Bill legislation will return the program to one worldwide portfolio. Experience gained in implementing the program has led to the identification and use of secondary objectives and monitoring criteria. The Program outputs that have been traditionally monitored are the number of volunteer assignments completed and the number of outreach events conducted by volunteers to share their experience and inform their peers about development issues and USAID programs overseas.

The Worldwide Program was evaluated in 1994. The NIS Program was most recently evaluated in 1996. Several partners have done internal evaluations, separate from the semi-annual reporting requirements, during the period of the current grants. As a result of previous evaluations, more emphasis has been placed on economic impact by concentrating volunteer assignments in specific geographical areas, service sectors, such as inputs and credit, and/or commodity chains selected on the basis of opportunity to enhance economic well being. Finally, and in line with PVC’s mandate and Congressional interest, the program has placed emphasis on enhancing PVO capacity to implement the program effectively and efficiently. The FtF Program has been transferred from the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation within the USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance to the Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau (EGAT), Office of Agriculture and Food Security. EGAT’s primary function is to support the Agency goals of reducing poverty and hunger and promoting peace and prosperity in developing and transition countries.

The first FtF Program originated with Section 406 of the Agriculture Trade, Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (Public Law 480) as amended in 1966. PL89-808 in 1966 introduced the “Farmer-to-Farmer” terminology. The FtF Program has been reauthorized every five years, sometimes including special initiatives such as the 1991 Russia and NIS Agribusiness and Finance Programs. Another special initiative in FY 2000 provided \$1.5 million to increase the participation of minority farmers in the Africa and Caribbean programs. The FY 2002 Farm Bill again reauthorized the FtF Program, renaming it the "John Ogonowski" Farmer-to-Farmer Program placing a special emphasis on Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean for a period not to exceed five (5) years, October 1, 2003 through September 30, 2008.

The Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF) Program, as the result of USAID reorganization, has been transferred from the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC) to the Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau (EGAT). The Office of Agriculture and Food Security under the management of EGAT is assuming the long-term management of the FtF Program. The Farmer-to-Farmer Program will support EGAT’s primary function of reducing poverty and hunger and promoting peace and prosperity in developing and transition countries. EGAT is designed to strengthen the capability of USAID Field Missions to work collaboratively with governments, entrepreneurs, investors, traders, scientists, farmers and community groups.

Purposes of the Evaluation

1. To provide guidance for developing the new RFA for the FtF Program when the current generation of agreements comes to term in FY 2003;
2. To assess the impact of the FtF Program on participating country hosts and the sectors in which they are involved;
3. To provide an assessment of program impact on U.S. PVO partners;
4. To assess overall effectiveness and efficiency of program design and management; and
5. To verify monitoring and evaluation systems put in place and assess the quality of the data being produced by the implementing organizations.

Methodology

The FtF impact evaluation was carried out on the basis of (but not limited to the following):

1. A review of proposals, grants, work plans, action memoranda, mid-term evaluations, evaluations commissioned by the grantees, grantees’ semi-annual and annual reports and host organization comments;
2. Interviews with FtF clients, grantee staff in the U.S. and the field, FtF volunteers (returned and in country), DCHA/PVC/FtF and EGAT staff, U.S. organizations that sponsor volunteers, State and USDA officials, USAID Bureau staff, Embassy and USAID field staff; and
3. Site visits to a representative number of FtF projects in the following countries:
 - Latin America Region--Mexico, Bolivia and Nicaragua--Ira "Buck" Richards III
 - Africa--Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Nigeria--Dr. Elon Gilbert
 - Newly Independent States and Russia--Russia and Ukraine--Bill Maltby

- Caribbean Basin--Haiti and Jamaica--Eric Benschoter
- Central Asia--Kazakhstan--Anthony Johnson
- Caucasus--Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan--Dr. Rodney Fink
- Implementing Partner Headquarters--CNFA, ACDI/VOCA, Winrock, Land O'Lakes, Partners of the Americas, OICI, FSC and FAMU--Lance Jepson

Progress to Date

Implemented by five U.S. PVOs, the project has been allocated \$65,387,898 and disbursed \$46,111,332 during its most recent funding period from FY 1997 to FY 2002. One year remains on the current funding because Congress extended the U.S. Farm Bill to September 30, 2003. The PVO implementers, during the last five-year period covered by the FY 1996 Farm Bill, have sent:

- 2302 volunteers (24% women) to 33 core countries
LOP Objective--2989
- These volunteers completed 3377 assignments
LOP Objective--3785
- And have completed 3,055 overseas trips
LOP Objective--2705

One full year of implementation remains to complete or exceed the LOP goals. The funding for the program ends October 1, 2003.

Inputs by Region

The volunteers have taken 3,055 trips overseas and provided \$24,442,250 dollars of professional working time. They were requested by 2,374 host organizations on four continents. The PVOs have 34 overseas offices with 24 American and 105 full time local staff. Significantly, nearly 80 percent of the assignments have been in the area of agri-business, that vital link between production agriculture, other economic sectors and the consumers.

REGIONAL TOTALS	Number of Hosts	Number of FtF Volunteers	Number of Volunteer Trips	Value of Volunteer Time	Number of Volunteer Assignments
Africa	121	299	365	\$3,003,301	403
Asia/Near East	198	230	310	\$1,798,450	354
Caribbean Basin	79	98	121	\$427,085	121
Latin America	326	405	544	\$2,799,226	548
Europe & Eurasia	1,650	1,270	1,715	\$16,394,188	1,951
PROGRAM TOTAL	2,374	2,302	3,055	\$24,422,250	3,377

The Returns from the Farmer-to-Farmer Program

FtF volunteers and their parent PVO organizations generated \$3,141,699 in contributions by private and public organizations that assist with their work in the host countries. The FtF volunteers have secured, while in country and in the U.S. after their return from their assignment, \$878,024 dollars in resources for their hosts and communities in which they have worked. The hosts have leveraged an additional \$5,029,773 from their governments, from other donors and charitable organizations. These contributions assisted with the generation of an additional \$55 million of resources in the host

country, assuring valuable assets are available to the rural populations, in-country training for hosts and in many instances an opportunity to study in the United States.

Source of Funds	Amount of Funding Generated
Estimate value of FtF Volunteers Professional Time	\$24,422,250
Resources leveraged by grantee/volunteer	\$878,024
Value of resources leveraged by host country	\$55,586,485
Resources leveraged by hosts	\$5,049,170
Participation by Public and Private Organizations	
Winrock	\$963,905
ACDI/VOCA	\$683,000
CNFA	\$78,100
Partners of the Americas	\$464,425
Land O'Lakes	\$74,245
Total Funding generated by FtF Participants	\$88,199,604
Total Expenditures for the FtF Program during FY1997-2002	\$46,111,331
The amount of Funds generated by FtF Participants exceeded the expenditures	\$42,088,273

Program Outreach in the U.S.

Program outreach has always been an important focus in the development of the FtF program. Volunteers are encouraged to perform outreach activities after their return by making presentations about their assignments to local civic groups, having newspaper articles written about their experiences and contacting their local Congressional Representatives about their experiences on a USAID funded program. Public outreach:

- Educates fellow Americans on countries that are developing their agricultural infrastructure;
- Increases the volunteer database and gives priority to using ordinary Americans who express an interest in the assignments; and
- Explains the importance for the United States to assist in the region's economic growth.

U.S. PUBLIC OUTREACH	ACDI/VOCA	CNFA	Land O'Lakes	Partners	Winrock	Totals
Number of FtF volunteers who have performed public outreach activities	46	151	37	227	205	666
Number of people contacted	4,770 436,000**	27,705	21,985	*2,839,000	27,064	81,545

*Partners' unique organization of citizen volunteers from Latin America and the United States mobilizes volunteers from both continents to work together. A large number of people-to-people activities promote a great deal of citizen contact. With chapters in 10 states networking to find volunteers to work in Latin America there is extensive contact between members about FtF. Partners has estimated that the number of people reached through public outreach activities including contact between chapter members, local presentations, newspapers and Television to date is 2,839,000 individuals.

**Total number of U.S. citizens contacted through media events (newspaper, television, etc.)

At least 70,000 people were involved in outreach programs of Winrock, Land O'Lakes and CNFA. Both CNFA and Winrock have well developed systems for encouraging returned FtF volunteers to participate in the outreach program and a system for measuring the results. The FtF program should assure that all those that participate in the program have the capacity to gather information regarding the outreach program.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Volunteer Performance: The volunteers are perceived as genuine people who are trying to make a difference. In contrast to other donor-supported programs, the emphasis is on a sharing of intellectual property via the knowledge and enthusiasm of the volunteers. Governments, organizations and individuals in the host countries universally have a special appreciation for this service above and beyond the performance level impacts.

One key element of the program is that it draws from a wide array of dedicated volunteers from many agriculture specialties. The following table, from the CNFA FY 2002 Annual Report, is one example of the diversification of the volunteers.

Who are the FtF Volunteers? Expertise/Affiliation

Country	Rural Extension Specialist	Agri-Business	Cooperative/Association Development	Business Development	Agriculture Credit/Financial Mgt	University Professors	Farmers	Farm Management	Marketing	Beekeeper	Consultants	Totals
Zimbabwe	3	1	24	5	6	3	3	4	5	2		56
Mozambique	1	2	1	5	1	3	2	4	3		2	24
Ukraine	3		8	1	7	4	16	3	3	1	4	50
Moldova	18	2	2	1	11	3	11	4	2	7	4	65
Totals	25	5	35	12	25	13	32	15	13	10	10	195
	12.5%	2.5%	17.5%	6.0%	12.5%	6.5%	16%	7.5%	6.50%	5%	5%	100.00%

Many FtF Volunteers are first timers, often with limited previous exposure to developing countries. There are also a significant number of volunteers who have carried out two or more assignments and/or have relevant experience in developing areas and agricultural development. ACDI/VOCA recently completed a survey of 344 volunteers serving between July 2001 and Feb 2003 and found that 73% were repeat volunteers. The “professional” volunteers appear to be generally more effective in relating their specific tasks to the context of the specific host organizations they are working with and the country/sector in general. They may be more sensitive to the need for making connections and knowledgeable about where to start looking, factors which are critical to achieving impact and sustainability.

The quality of the volunteers recruited is generally high and in line with the requirements of the specific assignments. The advice and training provided is universally appreciated. The mere presence of the volunteers often has a significant catalytic effect upon host organizations they work with. Volunteer recommendations are generally reasonable, reflecting a suitable mix of knowledge and common sense. From the perspective of the PVO field staff and the host organizations, the recruitment processes for volunteers is a stunning success.

2. PVO Performance: Overall the PVOs implementing FtF are performing very well. Considerable effort goes into identifying suitable volunteer assignments and host organizations. The details and logistics of volunteer assignments are managed quite efficiently. The amount of documentation that accompanies each volunteer assignment is impressive. Considerable attention is given to developing and updating strategies for individual (and groups of) host organizations and to networking with other projects and organizations (public, private, NGOs) who can provide complimentary services to host organizations. These complementary services (e.g. access to credit, improved technologies, market information) are often essential to the utility and impacts of the training and advisory services provided by volunteers. Grassroots organizations often have limited capacity to arrange for such complementary services and in the absence of other partners (NGOs, projects, government agencies, etc.), the burden of making the necessary connections and arrangements often fall upon FtF or simply do not happen. This reality has significant cost implications and is a critical consideration in determining the extent to which FtF chooses to work directly with grassroots organizations or via strategic partners who can assist. There are marked differences in the manner in which FtF is being implemented by individual PVOs. Each approach has strengths and weaknesses. Sharing experiences and lessons learned would provide useful guidance in efforts to improve the cost efficiency and performance of the program in the future.

The success of FtF to date owes much to the skills, initiative and hard work of the PVO staffs who recruit volunteers and manage the program in the regions. There is scope for improvement in several areas, including the development of country/regional strategies aimed at improving FtF contributions to Mission and USAID Strategic Objectives (SOs), cost effectiveness, impact assessment, and the participation of host organizations and partners in planning and facilitating volunteer assignments. The level of documentation may have gone past the point of diminishing returns in some instances and efforts to streamline the paper flow could be usefully examined as part of a comparative review of program management.

IMPACT OF FtF ON THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN ETHIOPIA

The FtF program in Ethiopia has been instrumental in developing primary cooperatives and cooperative unions based on free-market economic principles. Since FtF began in 1994, ACDI/VOCA has seen the development of 2,068 primary societies that are professionally managed, economically viable, transparent and sustainable rural businesses.

In order to facilitate cooperative development throughout Ethiopia, the government established Cooperative Promotion Bureaus (CBP). ACDI/VOCA worked directly in the CBPs and have trained all CBP staff in cooperative accounting, marketing store management, organization and management and savings and credit.

In the early days of FtF, USAID was somewhat ambivalent about the ACDI/VOCA FtF project. The Mission was planning on funding more traditional agricultural projects. Meanwhile, USAID staff participated in the briefing and debriefing of volunteers in the field and was impressed with the impact. Convinced by the results of the FtF program USAID opted to finance a two-year Cooperative Union Project (CUP). The CUP project was designed to organize primary cooperatives to a higher-level secondary societies-union in one region in Ethiopia. FtF Volunteers taught basic Training of Trainers courses to Ethiopian cooperative promoters on cooperative organization and management. These promoters trained other cooperative promoters who in turn trained cooperative farmer members.

The success of CUP resulted in the implementation of the Agricultural Cooperatives in Ethiopia (ACE) Project. After two years the ACE Project has helped to form or restructure 21 unions and over 2,068 primary cooperatives. In 1996 there was excellent agricultural production, which set the stage for the first time in Ethiopian history where farmer-members were paid dividends.

The FtF program has also been a catalyst for positive change by influencing policy at the national level in 1998 when GoE announced Proclamation 147/1998, which provides for the establishment of cooperative societies.

3. Program Results and Impact:
The volunteers have directly assisted 238,535 people, approximately 30% women, during their visits to the host organizations. 78,766 people have received direct formal training, 20% were women. There is considerable evidence of positive impacts from volunteer training at the level of the host organizations. Specific skills have been acquired (accounting, planning, management, etc.) that have significantly changed the manner in which organizations function. There are examples of serious reorientations of host organizations as a consequence of volunteer assignments as in the case of the cooperative movement in Ethiopia. The results have been most dramatic when improvements in organizational performance have complemented technological and/or productivity/enterprise changes and where there is a positive facilitating

environment. When judged against the primary objective established by Congress; [to further assist developing countries, middle-income countries, emerging markets, and Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Basin Countries to increase farm production and farmer incomes], the "John Ogonowski" Farmer-to-Farmer Program has been successful. It has achieved as much economic impact or more for the investment than most other USAID activities that team members have evaluated. Measured at the host impact level, as was done during the last four years, in the short run, nearly each and every activity had positive impacts.

Another element is the capacity to measure the impact of the activities at the field level. The evaluators of this FtF Program have traveled to 15 countries encompassing more than one third of the volunteers fielded during the last five years, found that more than 80% of the volunteer activities had a positive impact. The implementers, as verified by the evaluation team, have documented the impacts of host activities. They found that there were over 3,400 monitored activities during the evaluation period. These activities included: packaging and marketing, making loans, forming of associations, creating markets and distribution systems, finding water, developing fish ponds, developing coffee and organic cocoa export markets, breeding dairy cows, assisting certified seed agencies, improving varieties, creating micro-credit programs, growing medicinal plants, developing green-house production systems, promoting compost techniques, improving milk quality and increasing production, introducing new varieties of strawberries, potatoes, grapes and sweet peppers, teaching about accounting methods, completing business plans, installing irrigation and intensive grazing systems, financial plans, developing credit unions, co-ops, and associations. The impacts of these activities were increased farm income, improved farm family lives, increased farm production, new and improved cooperatives, increased crop

Village Revolution in Armenia

In Armenia several companies that provide processing have useful arrangements with farmers who provide them with supplies. One Yerevan dairy company has had the services of seven FtF volunteers. Three of the volunteers worked directly with the dairy processing company and four worked with the farmers who deliver milk to them. Volunteers have helped in many ways that included the following:

- Volunteer introduced a new cheese type that they are now marketing;
- Volunteer suggested they build a swine confinement facility so that cheese by-product could be used for swine production (advice followed);
- Volunteer introduced a quality control system which has helped the quality of their products; and
- Volunteer helped with marketing, labels, improved sampling, training for managers, defining market and how to determine company objectives.

The company has experienced substantial growth and projects show that the growth will continue. In 1991, they had three employees and bought 30 liters of milk per day. Now they buy between three thousand to four thousand liters of milk each day and have forty employees (32 men, 8 women). They estimate that they control thirty percent of the local market.

They buy milk from local farmers and provide a cooling tank for producers. In early 2000, they realized the farmers were not providing the high quality milk needed and entered a program with FtF personnel to have a training program for farmers. When the program started in 2000, milk production per cow was 5 to 7 liters. Now these farmers have production up to 18 liters per cow and the quality of milk is much higher. The company now pays farmers a premium if the butterfat content of the milk is over 3.6%. Many farmers have expanded their operation because of the increased production and are renovating their barns for increased numbers of cows. One farmer has increased his herd from 5 to 20 cows. Village members called the success in production a "Village Revolution."

production and many other outputs. The implementers have begun a process that has measured sector impact. Nearly every country has activities that, when aggregated by sector, provide measurable positive impact. The next challenge will be working to measure macroeconomic impact.

Sector Impact

The evaluation team requested that the implementers select one sector per country and provide impact measurements on the chosen sector. They were asked to list the data that is being gathered over the life of the project to measure quantitative impacts of activities at the sector level. The evaluation team was pleased with the results of this preliminary effort.

Below are five examples:

	Selected Sector Impact Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sector: Coffee ▪ Number of Assignments: 7 ▪ Number of hosts: 5 ▪ Implementer: Winrock 	<p>NEPAL: As a result of FtF's work with local extension agents and coffee growers, 11 District Coffee Producers Associations formed units of Nepal Coffee Producers' Association with a membership exceeding 3,000 growers. The District Cooperative Federation in Gulmi has installed a 20 Kg capacity roasting machine and started marketing roasted coffee for the local market. The processing plant serves more than 500 coffee growers. DCF exported 10 metric tons of coffee beans to Japan this year compared to 3.5 metric tons of coffee beans in 1999. Overall, 1,236 growers (44% of Nepal's Coffee Growers) have benefited either as direct FtF trainees or via improved technologies promoted by the FtF Program and local partners.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sector: Dairy ▪ Number of Assignments: 14 ▪ Number of hosts: 14 ▪ Implementer: ACDI/VOCA 	<p>Armenia: Beginning in 1999 FtF Caucasus introduced artificial insemination and new genetics to goat herds. As a direct result of the volunteer's recommendations, USDA established a goat-breeding center with more than \$300,000 in assistance. FtF has sent six volunteers to the centers to work on breed improvement, milk selection and cheese production. Cheese milk and goat sales have increased 29% (\$287,000) and host revenues have increased 38% (\$96,000) as a result of these interventions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sector: Marketing Cooperatives ▪ Number of Assignments: 9 ▪ Number of hosts: 9 ▪ Implementer: CNFA 	<p>Moldova: Over 900 individual dairy producers increased monthly revenue by exploiting a stable market for their milk; one vegetable market cooperative increased sales by 5.6 times; members of one honey marketing cooperative received monthly revenue from sales of over \$100 per person (average rural monthly salary is \$18).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sector: Marketing ▪ Number of Assignments: 14 ▪ Number of hosts: 5 ▪ Implementer: Land O' Lakes 	<p>Jamaica: Two hosts have developed new products. Shrimp are sold in packages labeled "Farm Grown". Product knowledge led to 10% increase farm efficiency, 20 new outlets and a 6,540% increase in farm revenues.</p>

	Selected Sector Impact Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sector: Dairy ▪ Number of Assignments: 14 ▪ Number of hosts: 5 ▪ Implementer: Partners of the Americas 	<p>El Salvador: 31 organizations were trained in methods to produce compost from organic waste. 10% increase in income from the sale of vegetables grown using organic compost. Production of vegetables has increased 45% from the use of compost.</p>

The evaluation team concluded that in the largest majority of cases a significant degree of impact is occurring. Attitudes are changing, knowledge and skills are being transferred and increased level of income and improved well-being of the hosts has taken place. In some cases this change is affecting a key sector. The impact of volunteer assistance may also be increased through a more focused approach. This would include more sector analysis in the planning process to multiply the effects of short term TA in targeted production areas.

It is essential to work with partners capable of reaching large numbers of hosts in order to have any serious change of impacts at the sector level. PVO staff should not be expected to take the lead in putting all the necessary pieces together, carrying out the sector analysis etc., but work with potential partners who are already collecting sector data in many countries.

4. USAID Management of the FtF Program:

The Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF) Program, as the result of USAID reorganization, has been transferred to the Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau (EGAT). The Office of Agriculture and Food Security under the management of EGAT is assuming the long-term management of the Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF) Program. Potentially there is a lot of synergy with EGAT programs focusing on these activities. Programs such as the CRSPS, private sector support projects (buy-ins such as RAISE), BIFAD programs, HBCU's IT projects could all play a potential roll.

Partners Wisconsin/Nicaragua Dairy Project

Farmer-to-Farmer Program volunteers from the Wisconsin Partners Chapter have assisted Nicaraguan dairy farmers since 1998 in a series of volunteer interventions designed to introduce and promote improved practices appropriate for Nicaraguan conditions in production, conservation, storage, processing and commercialization of milk. The volunteers were dairy farmers, university professors and cooperative extension personnel.

Over 1,000 direct beneficiaries participated in seminars, courses and attended field days. These included dairy co-op members (14 co-ops), non-member producers, co-op and project technicians, and university students.

The impact was even more widespread because many of the participants were trainers, and because of secondary diffusion and adoption of practices by farm workers and neighbors. In addition, the international coordinator of PRODEGA stated that all dairy producers in the departments of Boaco and Chontales had benefited because the strengthened co-ops had been able to negotiate a 20% higher base price for raw milk from the major intermediary purchasers.

The Nicaraguan Partners FtF Program has collaborated with the Nicaraguan agricultural extension agency, the dairy producers association, several US PVOs, and the Animal and Veterinary Science departments of the National Agricultural University.

Prior to the transfer the program was managed by one direct hire, who was a full time manager, two PSC contractors and one Program Analyst. Now the entire program is supervised by one PSC (personal service contractor).

This worldwide program, operating in 42 countries in all four bureaus, with 34 overseas offices staffed with 105 full time and 45 part-time host country staff, and 62 full and part time Americans disbursing minimum of \$5,000,000 dollars per year can not be effectively managed this way. With the increased focus on sector impact measurement, the addition of 8 minority subgrantees with an emphasis on Africa and the Caribbean, the issuing of a new RFA, the FtF Office will be understaffed for the foreseeable future. The next six months will be especially difficult.

The staffing arrangement proposed is the immediate assignment of a part time Direct Hire for oversight, the addition of one senior PSC technical advisor for program development and evaluation, one program analyst/data manager plus outsourced access to part time administrative support services including web site management and arrangements for conferences and seminars.

Intensive Rotational Grazing

Seven volunteers in six assignments over the period from March 2001- Sept. 2002, assisted at conferences, conducted seminars, courses and field days for which the principal objective was to teach farmers and agricultural specialists the principles and practices associated with improved forage quality and intensive rotational grazing, including the use of electric fencing.

Over this period approximately 10 farmers decided to install electric fencing as a direct result, some of which were assisted in the design and installation by the FtF volunteers. One of these was Sr. Francisco Gutierrez Espinosa, Finca Sopresa, in the Department of Boaco.

Mr. Gutierrez has 525 acres, 315 of which were used to maintain 22 milk cows in an extensive grazing system. He got an average of 5 liters/cow/day, of those milked, though as he said, often his workers were not able to find them all. The cows expended a lot of energy walking, and they were not healthy, requiring regular treatment for ticks and internal parasites. Herbicides were used to keep down weed growth in the pasture.

Mr. Gutierrez attended a seminar on intensive rotational grazing given by FtF volunteer Mark Kopecky in June 2002. He was chosen from a number of farmers who offered their farms to be used as demonstrations of the intensive grazing system. Mr. Kopecky designed the system and helped install the solar powered portable electric fence that he had brought with him from Wisconsin. Mr. Gutierrez now maintains his 22 milk cows on 25 acres, subdivided in small pastures of approximately 1/3 acre on which the cows are kept for one day. Milk production has increased from 5 to 8 liters per day.

Mr. Gutierrez said that the intensive grazing system with electric fence is simple and inexpensive; he considered it to be the most important innovation that he had seen in his 22 years as a cattleman. He has diversified, planting 21 acres of valuable hardwood, taking degraded hillsides out of pasture. He said that the system had renewed his enthusiasm for the business, that he had never had better pasture, that his cows were consuming better nutrition because of the well-manured pasture, that they had never been so healthy or had so few parasites.

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This staff would help assure the continued success of the activity.

Working with Missions: It is important to develop a good working relationship with the USAID Mission early in project development. By coordinating with the USAID Mission it becomes possible and practical to provide programming that meets FtF and USAID Mission objectives. Every implementer must make an effort to collaborate with every Mission in the country where they are working. The implementers should give more attention to developing strategies at the sector levels by collaborating with Mission SO teams and utilizing their analytical capacity that can provide a context for the identification of priority activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Extend the NIS program for minimum of three years for the following reasons:**
 - The program in the NIS is very strong in every aspect. The implementers have a program with an excellent design, and they have exceeded their input goals, and have a very capable local staff in place. The design of the program was done in close collaboration with other donors, other USG agencies and USAID Missions and complements their SOs. There is a good system already in place to measure impact. With little additional effort the PVOs could begin to measure rates of return.
 - The program was last evaluated in 1996, the last RFA was issued in 1998 and program implementation began in FY 2000. By the end of this funding cycle there will have been four years of program implementation.
 - Hosts are happy with the assistance received, volunteer experts are pleased with their contributions and cultural exchange and positive economic impacts measure the success of the program.
2. **Issue a Request for Applications (RFA) as soon as possible for the Worldwide Program (WW).** The WW Program includes all those countries with USAID Missions in the following Bureaus: Latin American and Caribbean, Africa and Asia and the Near East. The WW Program was extended in FY 2000 for two years to enable the end of the FtF Program to coincide with the end of 1996 Farm Bill.

The following recommendations apply to both the NIS and the WW Programs in order to provide uniform administration and implementation:

3. **The implementing organizations should have clearly defined sectors linked to USAID Mission strategies and program objectives.** Implementers should present a strategic plan for each key country sector. The plan will explain how and where the implementers will have the greatest potential impact. More attention should be given to the development of strategies at the regional and country levels that can provide a context for the identification of priority sectors and projects as well as the allocation of volunteers slots among countries and thematic areas. The implementers should be encouraged to assign a cluster of volunteers in specific sectors. Sectors based on an analytical process

that includes working the USAID Missions. In all instances it is recommended that more attention be given to ex ante impact assessment.

This can best be done by:

- Implementing organizations taking the lead in developing regional, country and sub-sector strategies;
 - Establishing FtF advisory committees at the regional and/or country levels to facilitate the participation of USAID, donor representatives, host government agencies and other partners; and
 - Collaborating with partner organizations to undertake the detailed analysis supporting strategies for sub-sectors or theme areas, although PVO staff and volunteers might well participate in this process. For example, project implementers could utilize the Mission SO Teams' analysis to provide a context for the identification of priority activities.
4. **Implementing organizations should provide in their proposal budget an expected cost per day per volunteer for each budget year, subject to USAID approval.** The cost per volunteer day should be reported both with and without travel and per diem. USAID will monitor this cost upon submission of the annual report.
 5. **Set the project input goals using volunteer days.** Measure the inputs on the basis of volunteer days. Continue to measure the costs on the basis of volunteer days. The cost per volunteer day should be measured in two ways with and without travel and per diem, in order to get a clearer picture of the cost per volunteer day.
 6. **Follow up this evaluation with a PVO conference on impact.** Collaboration between the PVOs could produce more consistency in approach, especially given the staff time devoted to the ME&I systems and the importance that the data is to the various stakeholders. PVOs could present rationale of approach to each other in a forum sponsored by USAID. The goal would be to streamline the reporting approach, discuss the aggregation of sector data, determine how to interface with USAID Missions, and explore ex post use. Hopefully, this approach would produce some cost savings as well. This effort should be voluntary and without bars to ideas for improving the sometimes burdensome collection and reporting of data.
 7. **Link the monitoring program to the results that the implementing organization is willing to commit to from the onset of all FtF activities.** There is a distinct need for greater results oriented frameworks in the planning process. This will give improved structure and focus to volunteer assistance, as well as facilitate project monitoring to improve impact reporting. Many of the current impact evaluation systems are too labor intensive, mainly due to a lack of a results framework in the original proposals. New programs should develop clear hypotheses and basic baseline analysis to support them. Monitoring systems can then easily be linked to a set of well-defined objectives and indicators can be simplified.

8. **Continue to support Peace Corps Volunteers at the field level.** The evaluation team proposes that implementing organizations continue to partner with Peace Corps. Peace Corps volunteers or staff would make a request to the implementer in the region by providing a scope of work.
9. **Expand the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) and Minority-Based Organizations.** The results of the addition of \$1.5 million in FY 2000 was the funding of seven subgrants to increase participation by minority farmers, organizations, and 1890 Land Grant Colleges and Universities for the implementation of the program in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean Basin. These minority institutions are now gaining experience and building their capacity to implement the FtF Program. ADS 321 allows for increasing the participation of MSIs in Agency programs and activities. It enables USAID to designate grants and cooperative agreements to be awarded to MSIs via limited competition among these institutions. Smaller/Minority-Based Organizations should be encouraged to submit proposals under this RFA either as the primary grantee or as a subgrantee with other eligible organizations. Based on the capacity building experiences gained during the last two years the evaluation team believes that these organizations will be capable of providing the leadership to develop and expand their program activities to Africa and the Caribbean. We would expect that some MSIs would be subgrantees.

THE MAIN REPORT

3/14/2003

THE NEXT STEP

Building on Success

John Ogonowski
Farmer-to-Farmer Evaluation
Oct. to Dec. 2002

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THE EVALUATION

The "John Ogonowski" Farmer-to-Farmer Program has succeeded against the original Congressional mandate, "to further assist developing countries, middle-income countries, emerging markets, and Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Basin Countries to increase farm production and farmer incomes". Against this objective, the activity is highly successful and compares very well with other USAID development projects measured at the farm impact level. Based on an analysis by the evaluation team, at least 80% of all activity increases farm production and farmers' incomes.

1. Volunteer Performance

1.1 Numbers of Volunteers

The first Worldwide evaluation in 1994 reported five implementers had sent 400 volunteers overseas between 1991 and 1994. The December 2002 Worldwide evaluation reports 2,302 volunteers have taken 3,055 international trips to complete approximately 3,377 assignments with an average of 18 days in country. Approximately 24% of the volunteers have been women.

SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS

Note these assignment figures do not include the FY 1992-97 Agri-business or Ag-finance activities

FtF Activity	LOP Targets	Previous Assignments 10/1/00 to 9/30/01	Assignments Fielded in FY2002	Total to date 09/30/02	Assignments remaining to be fielded	Remaining to be fielded
NIS*	1,869	857	471	1,328	568	30%
WW**	1,929	1,306	318	1,635	389	20%

***The implementers have projected 623 assignments to field but need only 568 to meet their targets. They will probably exceed targets by project completion date on September 30, 2003.**

****The implementers have projected 275 assignments left to field but need 389 to meet their targets. They will probably miss planned targets by about 6% on September 30, 2003.**

A problem of measurement. There are a lot of ways to determine if the project is meeting its objectives. The numbers of volunteers, although it would seem simple enough to measure, is difficult to obtain, primarily due to a lack of common definitions for what constitutes a volunteer, a trip or a volunteer assignment. For example, some implementers define every volunteer who travels internationally as one volunteer. Others feel that if the same volunteer travels three times in one year or even three years that is still one volunteer. Assignments are even more confusing because one implementer will say that a volunteer must complete 18 days of volunteer work to count as an assignment, while others will say a 14 day visit to a country is an assignment. Some will say if you

complete two scopes of work in one overseas trip that is an assignment, while others will say that is two assignments.

To address this confusion and to improve reporting accuracy, USAID management devised a set of definitions for each. Consequently, the numbers of volunteers, trips and assignments have been more consistent, at least for the last two to three years.

The issue of differing terminology between “volunteer” and “volunteer assignment” has been a source of confusion in tracking inputs and level of effort. The cooperative agreements (CA) set the goals in terms of volunteer numbers for the life of project and then the implementers use the number of assignments in reporting in order to meet the goals. For example, the CA set the goal of volunteers at 100; it is possible to meet the goals by having 80 volunteers' complete 100 assignments by carrying out two or three assignments per trip. This obviously creates some efficiencies, by reducing overseas trips, orientations costs, startup costs, etc., but it is misleading if the PVO agrees to recruit 100 volunteers and then fields 80 and calls it 100 because of a vague or complicated definition of terms.

Recommendation: Set the project input goals using volunteer days. Measure the inputs on the basis of volunteer days. Continue to measure the costs on the basis of volunteer days. For example set a goal of fielding 1,800 volunteer days (approximately equal to 100 assignments). The implementers will determine how they will complete this number of volunteer days. They could use more days per volunteer or more volunteers, each with fewer days. The team believes that this method of setting input goals with implementers would lead to less confusion of terms and would make it easier for USAID management to determine if each grantee is meeting the terms of their grant. Each

implementer already measures average cost per volunteer travel day, general program administrative expense per volunteer day, overseas office costs per volunteer day, average travel days per volunteer so it would be natural to set input goals in volunteer days.

In the northern area of Azerbaijan a potato farmer was very pleased with the production increase he received as a result of a FtF expert's advice. The expert introduced new disease-free varieties, introduced new planting technologies, introduced use of plastic to extend the season, proper fertilization, crop rotation for disease prevention, bought them a backpack sprayer and taught them proper plant spacing. As a result of the volunteer's introductions, the new varieties yielded twenty-five tons/ha versus seven tons/ha with traditional varieties and technology. The volunteer worked with two villages (two families from each village) in an effort to multiply the returns to more than the host family. The village produced forty hectares of potatoes and currently sixteen hectares are using the improved technology and varieties. This relates to a current increase of two hundred eighty-eight tons of potatoes in the two villages and the hectares in improved varieties and technology will increase next year.

1.2 Quality of Volunteers and Volunteer Input

Volunteers come from many walks of life to carry out FtF programs. Included are farmers, college professors, bankers and many specialized experts such as sausage experts and dairy processing specialists. University professors, often with extension background lend their expertise in a variety of projects related to their subject matter expertise. Team interviews with country

staff and hosts organizations reveal that volunteers were technically extremely competent and able to transmit their knowledge effectively. Approximately half of the volunteers are actively working in their profession whereas the remainder are either working part time or are retired. The use of active and retired volunteers provides a balance between transferring the latest technology and providing the voice of experience.

The implementer staffs that maintain volunteer database information check with employers and other references in selecting volunteers and have assembled an impressive list of potential volunteers in their databases. Ordinarily more than one choice of volunteer expert is provided for each host and a decision made on the comparison of capabilities available to meet the objectives of the host. Hosts felt that they had received expert advice and had made a friend. Although precise data are not available, a significant percentage of volunteers maintain contact with their host following their visit. In some cases, these relationships have lasted for years and have provided useful help on such items as equipment specifications, marketing, varieties and many other technical and personal matters.

It is recommended that PVOs do analysis and share best practices on maximizing use of volunteer time. Field staffs often feel compelled to shuttle a volunteer to as many hosts as possible. This can be extremely taxing on the volunteer. Better use of his/her time may have been working with one or two hosts in one location. As well as being extremely taxing on the volunteer, the volunteer may

Volunteers Increase Opportunities For Women In Agriculture.

The Fantsuam Foundation, an NGO in Nigeria works with women's groups in rural communities, Micro-credit is one of the foundation's primary activities. The foundation increased their clients from 80 to 500 six months after Alan Lessler's volunteer assistance. Training on record keeping with computer spreadsheets, rather than hand written records, has minimized errors and improved calculations of loan records. This translates into better use of staff time and better client satisfaction. New registration and annual membership fees increased the foundation's revenue by \$500 and reduced dependence on benefactors who have been paying the staff salaries. Fantsuam is looking for new funding sources for loans and crating new partnerships with other micro-finance organizations and Lessler's has continued to help after he returned home by identifying proper funding sources. His continuing advice will increase their chances of receiving grants to increase their capital for loans to some 2,000 women farmers who are currently on a waiting list. Fantsuam is an excellent example of a strategic partnership between FtF and a local NGO for the benefit of many village level groups.

not have sufficient time with any group to transfer the technologies he/she has come to teach. Better use of his/her time may mean working with one or more hosts in one location.

In the case of returning volunteers, they are quite capable of making the determination themselves. In addition to the cost economies, there is considerable scope for increasing impacts by having individual volunteers network within and across sub sectors by working with more than one host. In any event this is a judgment that PVO field offices are capable of making on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the volunteers involved.

Country staffs monitor the performance of the volunteers.

This information is fed back to the recruiter and notations made for future assignments. Since many volunteers take more than one assignment both in the same and in other countries, the monitoring of performance plays an important role in future assignments. One evaluator interviewed seven volunteers and found that 4 of them had taken assignments with at least two FtF implementers. The type of person who volunteers for an FtF assignment generally is technically competent and desires the opportunity to share his/her knowledge with others.

Volunteers visited on-site by evaluators made the following suggestions:

- Provide, when possible, more lead time so that better preparation of documents and supplies could be arranged;
- Reduce the amount of cash they must bring to pay for housing, transportation and other costs associated with the project;
- Provide the possible access to funds that might help make the project more successful.

Additional volunteers were randomly chosen from an implementer's database to determine their volunteer experiences.

The following observations were made based on phone calls to these volunteers:

- In most cases interpreters were very good, however, some said interpreters were limited on technical vocabulary needed for the project (a banker and food technologist said they were hampered because interpreters were not familiar with terms)
- Concern was raised regarding publicity either before or after the trip. Since the present administration encourages volunteer work, it seemed appropriate that more press should be obtained from the FtF volunteer experiences. Most tried to keep in contact with their host entity. Many maintained contacts through the Internet and several arranged training in the U.S. for their host. Many also raised money or collect resources for hosts.
- Several (especially those in California) felt the trip was too long and should be broken up with a stop on the way (some said it was authorized but they didn't know about it until after the trip).
- Volunteers were delighted with the cultural exchange benefits of their trip.
- Some stated that they felt the host didn't know what was supposed to happen when the volunteer arrived (they felt the host should be better informed).
- Most felt that the length of their stay was appropriate for what they had to do.
- Several expressed concern about fast driving and failure to have access to seat belts.
- Volunteers often become a great source for recruiters by offering names and contact information for their colleagues with the expertise for future assignments.

Over 60 volunteers provided email responses to a questionnaire administered by the Latin America team specialist. Comments are synthesized below:

- *How many times were you a volunteer?* About half of the FtF volunteers surveyed completed multiple assignments. The number of repeat volunteers increased annually over the evaluation period. One Partners chapter reported that they encourage second and third follow-up assignments believing that experienced volunteers are more effective (an opinion shared by host organizations). ACDI/VOCA volunteers frequently had multiple assignments,

one FtF volunteer reporting that he had 15 in many countries, some of them with VOCA, and one elsewhere with Partners.

- *Did you feel that you accomplished something worthwhile?* Very few answered negatively. Some weren't sure because they had no follow up report from the implementer. The rest were positive, quite a few enthusiastically so.
- *Do you feel that the FtF program should be renewed?* There were no negative responses, even from those few who said that they had had a bad experience, one of whom, despite his own unsatisfactory assignment, said that he thought the program had tremendous potential. Two reserved judgment. The vast majority answered with an emphatic "yes!"; many offered the opinion that FtF was the best development program they were aware of, with tremendous benefits for both countries, and for the host organization and the volunteer.
- One respondent said that his experience as a volunteer had been the highpoint of his professional career. Several volunteer respondents, from all three implementers, said they were grateful for the opportunity to comment and two offered to intervene on behalf of the FtF program by contacting their Senators and Congressmen. Another mentioned that he had been consulted by the Secretary of Agriculture to talk about USAID's future direction, and had presumably extolled the virtues of the FtF program in the discussion.

Based on the comments of volunteers, the following suggestions are noted for consideration:

- Facilitate contact between returned volunteers and volunteers preparing for an assignment to improve orientation process and provide technical back-up;
- FtF field staff could facilitate communication between returned volunteers and hosts, as well as keeping volunteers informed of the results of their assignments;
- Consider preparing a news release when the volunteer leaves the country. At the volunteer debriefing, ask for the name of her/his local newspaper, television and radio station and send a communication to them. It could be a "boilerplate" release describing FtF and the country with a listing of the volunteer's name, hometown and brief project description. One contact suggested that the volunteer be provided the name of their congressional representative and a possible message for them (the volunteer) to send describing their program;
- Develop and implement safety standards (driving standards) that are published and adhered to;
- Provide the alternative for breaks on the trips from the west coast, especially for older volunteers; and
- When preparing a scope of work and planning for the FtF volunteer visit, ask the volunteer to send an advance list of technical terms (appropriate to his/her discipline) so the translator can be better prepared for the task. Advise the translator to become familiar with these terms.

1.3 Returned volunteers are quite active in sharing information about their work experience with others. Many television programs included FtF volunteer experts and local and regional newspapers cover their work as well. Some academic volunteers have published papers and made presentations to their peers about their experiences as an FtF volunteer.

Some other examples of returned volunteer impacts follow:

- Volunteers have provided, at their own expense, equipment, seeds, plant materials, software and other items to help support the host they had worked with;
- Volunteers have returned home and designed plans for dairy systems, irrigation systems, research proposals, business plans, applications for grants and a multitude of support not called for in their assignment;
- Volunteers have returned home and arranged, and paid for, medical care for contacts they made on an FtF assignment (eye surgery, for example);
- Volunteers have maintained e-mail contact (sometimes through country staff) with the host on a continuous basis;
- Volunteers have paid for the trip of a host to the U.S. to acquaint them with technology that would be of use to them. They also arranged tours of U.S. facilities and meetings with industry specialist; and
- Volunteers have provided significant funding to the operation of a host that they were working with.

Numerous other examples of contributions made by volunteers are available but the conclusion is that volunteers are technically competent and give freely of their skills and their personal concern after carrying out their assignments.

1.4 Volunteer Support

Hosts frequently request monetary support to accompany volunteer assistance. The advantage of the FtF volunteer is that they have no funding for projects and the host, knowing this, asks for a volunteer for their assistance, not for money. If funding accompanied each volunteer some hosts would ask for a volunteer because money is involved. Many worthwhile projects are recognized because of expert's visits to host sites. In some cases, the availability of some funding would help multiply the efforts of volunteers beyond their hosts' environment. FtF experts are in a unique situation because they bring no money with them (unlike many donor projects); therefore, when a host requests help it is for a specific need and not the money that goes with it. With this in mind, it would not be desirable to give all volunteers a sum of money for their projects. The idea of demonstration programs for educating others is, however, a viable alternative for such ideas as a new processing line, new process for developing a processed product, packaging system, introduction of variety testing and many other ideas.

Nepal: Coffee Sector

FtF has completed seven volunteer assignments with five hosts in Nepal's growing coffee sector. As a result of FtF's work with local extension agents and coffee growers, 11 District Coffee Producers Associations formed as units of Nepal growers. Growers have reported yield increases of 20-30%. Roasting capacity has increased almost 300%. The District Cooperative Federation (DCF) in Gulmi has installed 20 kg capacity roasting machine and started marketing roasted coffee in local markets. The processing plant serves more than 500 coffee growers of Gulmi district. DCG exported 10 metric tons of coffee beans to Japan this year compared to 3.5 in 1999. Overall, 1,236 growers (44% Of Nepal's coffee growers) have benefited either as direct FtF trainees or via improved technologies promoted by the FtF Program and Winrock's local partners.

One FtF host received funding from another donor for a demonstration drip irrigation system for his one and a half hectare orchard. The drip irrigation system was installed and worked well, however, the cost was around \$15,000 and the pump and materials were imported. The impact on the region would have been greater if a local plastic or metal tank were used in conjunction with a “float valve” and other local pipe, hose and valves to make an affordable and reproducible irrigation system. Thus, care is necessary for implementation of demonstration sites.

Suggesting a formula for such a program might be based on the total numbers of volunteers coming to an area in a given year. The allocation of \$750 per volunteer (not to be used by the volunteer but for demonstration/shareable activities) might be a useful formula. This would mean for a country that was bringing in 30 volunteers per year, the discretionary funding would total \$22,500. The funding should be available in-country with a local procedure for approving partial use of the funds.

Volunteers bring many useful materials (seed, software, spices, small tools and many other items) with them so it would be a good idea to allow each volunteer an amount of up to \$100 for special goods to be left in country. This too should have easy approval and should rest with the U.S. recruiting office. The volunteer expert should submit an itemized listing of materials provided to the project.

For example, Partners of the Americas national office gives the host country staff a sum of \$300 with each volunteer and state partner. The U.S. state Partners chapters and the volunteer also contribute varying amounts to pay for materials and frequently pay transportation costs for donated equipment. The host organization (often multiple hosts) benefits without even being aware of the existence of these funds, and in fact, provides or pays for food and lodging of volunteers, as well as transportation. Thus, the host does not see the volunteer as a funding source.

Conclusion: The concept of the volunteer being needed for his/her expertise should be maintained, however, the possibility of some funding being available to help assure impact of volunteer programs has merit in some specific cases. For examples some implementers have:

- Secured complimentary funding from partner organizations, in the U.S. and abroad; and
- Programmed volunteers within larger development projects with funds available to implement recommendations.

1.5 Factors Affecting the Cost per Volunteer Day

The evaluation team considers that although the costs per volunteer day may appear to be high, even comparable to those for paid consultants, there are explanations for many of these costs. Even so, the team has identified inefficiencies and proposes changes be made to keep costs down. USAID management of the FtF program should monitor cost annually.

USAID management of the FtF program should monitor cost annually.

Cost Summary Table						
	ACDI/VOCA	CNFA	Land O'Lakes	Partners	Winrock	Project Total 1997-2002
Expenditures to date	\$23,583,264	\$4,733,770	\$2,480,451	\$3,454,327	\$11,859,519	\$46,111,331
Personnel expenditures	\$4,227,750	\$1,376,299	\$581,186	\$950,376	\$2,687,580	\$9,823,191
Percent spent on staff	18%	29%	23%	28%	23%	21%
Expenditures per host	\$15,127	\$26,744	\$15,033	\$13,873	\$50,040	\$27,300
Expenditures per assignment	\$14,749	\$12,691	\$10,207	\$8,425	\$15,771	\$13,654
Donated time as a percent of expenditures	69%	37%	41%	29%	33%	52%
Expenditures per primary beneficiary	\$185	\$220	\$248	\$179	\$195	\$193
Cost per trainee	\$1,105	\$267	\$319	\$179	\$929	\$585
Cost per Volunteer Day	\$916	\$795	\$732	\$546	\$926	\$771

The average USAID cost to field a short term consultant through a private sector for-profit firm on an overseas mission **including salary**, program administration, travel and per diem is approximately \$1,200 per day. The cost to field a FtF volunteer varies from a low of \$546 per day for Partners to a high of \$926 per day for Winrock with an average of \$771 per day. The volunteers' salary costs of between \$400 and \$450 per day are considered in-kind contributions to the program.

A paid consultant beginning a new assignment can expect that:

- Scope of work, key contacts, etcetera have already been developed and are in place;
- Permanent donor staff are in country including design teams that developed the project activities; and
- Permanent contract staff such as a chief of party, technical and logistical support staff are already in the field.

These investments are **not** reflected in the cost of the for-profit assignment.

By contrast, FtF programs must bear the brunt of all these costs and they are reflected in the daily cost of the volunteer. FtF implementers do the design, the scopes of work, the follow up to

assignments, provide logistical support and security, translation and interpreting services as well as providing background information that brings the volunteer up to speed on the overall country context. Locating the hosts, developing the profiles and implementing the impact monitoring system are included in overseas administrative costs. These costs **are** reflected in the cost of the assignment.

Some excessive costs during this evaluation period can be explained by the events of 9/11, and by the fact that FtF volunteer's only average 18-day assignments and travel long distances, the bulk of the assignments have been in Russia and the NIS.

Nonetheless, FtF volunteers' current costs are:

- Travel and per diem averages about \$200 per day.
- FtF field office support totals around \$100-\$300 per day.
- General program administration is around \$200-\$400 per day.

The evaluation team suggests that every effort must be made to keep costs from increasing above current levels. We recommend several things that could be done to keep costs down including:

- Greater shift of program responsibilities to the field;
- Increased use the Internet for field recruiting, technical support and monitoring and evaluation;
- Multiple assignments per field visit;
- Regional Offices in adjacent countries;
- Utilize returned volunteers as recruiters;
- Closer monitoring of general program administration;
- More efficient use of American Staff; and
- Use Hosts for multiple programs.

Conclusion: The evaluation team is confident that if each implementing organization is made fully aware of the major cost invested in the program that each will make a significant effort to reduce the cost per volunteer day.

Recommendation: Implementing organizations should provide in their proposal budget an expected cost per day per volunteer for each budget year, subject to USAID approval. The cost per volunteer day should be reported both with and without travel and per diem. USAID should monitor this cost upon submission of the annual report.

1.6 Volunteer Safety

One evaluator has worked with FtF programs in at least four countries (at least two implementers) and raised concern about the safety of transportation in the country. Seat belts are often not required and many times not available. Likewise, the speed vehicles move may be unsafe. Speeds up to 150 km/hr (93 mph) are sometimes reached and drivers, with the name of the implementing agency on their vehicle, sometimes go through towns at a high rate of speed which could affect the safety of people in the villages and which creates the image of the "ugly American." Guidelines for transportation and drivers were not available, and it is strongly recommended that a mandatory

transportation policy be in place for transporting all volunteers. Such a code could include the following:

- Maximum allowable speed of not over 100 km/hr (62 mph), adjustable downward on poor roads and a slight upwards adjustment on good roads;
- Mandatory use of seat belts – when a vehicle hired for project use doesn't have seat belts, require their installation and reimburse the owner for the cost;
- Mandatory use of seat belts when volunteer is transported by host – host must provide a vehicle with proper seat belts (suggested to be reimbursable by project);
- Signed contract by driver acknowledging he/she will be terminated if reported to be traveling over the maximum stated speed allowed;
- Maintain a logged maintenance record for each project vehicle including the mileage record of tires on the vehicle;
- Vehicles should have a periodic safety check;
- Safety windshields mandatory in each project vehicle;
- Drivers are required to follow all safety regulations and speeds of the country/municipality; and
- On the post-project evaluation (given by implementer after volunteer returns to the US) have a required questionnaire section addressing safety (were you comfortable with our drivers? Did they drive excessively fast? If so, how fast? etc.)

In the Yerevan, Armenia region a sausage factory has made excellent progress, much of which the owner credits to FtF experts. The factory has a fleet of trucks which delivers sausage throughout the region and the owner estimates they provide twenty-five percent of the meat to the local area. They produce 150-200 kg of meat products, such as sausages and jerky each day. The factory has utilized four experts and credits them with many of the successful strides forward made by the company. From the volunteers the plant learned how to do a good job of cutting meat, new techniques including production of jerky, marketing assistance and the flow of materials in the processing line. The volunteers helped develop the production of summer sausages, bratwurst, food safety assessments and production technologies of turkey meat. The facility is modern, expanding and very clean. This plant is producing jobs for the region and getting into the export meat business. Eight years ago the company had a small area for working and had three employees. Now the company has 1,000 square meters of space, 41 production and management staff and 39 support (truck drivers, etc.) staff (48 women and 32 men). They estimate that 40 families are being supported by this plant and now even more as the result of an expansion project of over \$150,000. Sixty percent of their meat supply is purchased locally and the remainder imported (much from Canada).

There are other safety concerns, including the extent to which choice of countries should be influenced by conditions, such as whether relations with the U.S. Government are good or bad? Whether or not there are anti-American demonstrations. In general, the team favors having FtF try to maintain some distance from the ups and downs of government to government relations as much as it is possible for a USAID supported program and not pulling out when the going gets tough. However as conditions can deteriorate to the point where it is difficult for all but the most intrepid and seasoned volunteer to operate it may be time to leave. A degree of continuity in effort is important in relations to potential impact.

Conclusion: It should be remembered that the safety of volunteers (as well as everyone else) is paramount. An unfortunate accident could jeopardize the future of the program, especially if good safety policies were not being followed. This is an issue important to all FtF implementers.

1.7 Length of Assignment

The length of a volunteer assignment is considered in a number of different scenarios. Some hosts felt a longer assignment would be desirable; however, in some cases they could not afford to sponsor the volunteer for a longer period of time. The average duration of an expert’s trip to the Caucasus, for example, is 17 days. The average duration for the other PVO’s is 18 days. The optimum length of stay is best defined as “the amount of time needed to do the specific assignment”. Since many FtF experts are still in the work force, an assignment longer than the current average might eliminate them as potential volunteers^a. In looking at the volunteers sent to the Caucasus by ACDI/VOCA since 1992, the following data, taken from volunteer applications, are worthy of consideration^b.

- Total numbers of volunteers since 1992 353
- Those who stated they are actively working 192
- Those stating they were retired 38
- Unknown (or nothing listed) 45
- Not categorized 77
- Average age 59

In Georgia a company that exports frozen foods has been very successful and credits a great deal of their success to FtF experts. The company requested volunteer experts to help with process grading, contamination and plant hygiene. Volunteers helped the company identify and expand their markets to Russia and Europe. Volunteers helped them identify clients in Russia, develop client databases, promotions and marketing techniques. In addition, the company forward contracts with farmers for much of their production (a technique suggested by FtF experts). The plant was having problems with growers’ pest management and proper use of pesticides and, with the help of volunteer experts, developed a monitoring program to help improve produce quality. The company, based on suggestions of volunteers, is providing some inputs (seedlings, for example) to the producers. The company has had significant impact since beginning in 2001, and they credit the help of FtF experts for this growth. The numbers of employees have expanded as follows:

Employees	2001	2002	2003 (estimate)
Full-time	14	28	30+
Part-time	100 for 2 days	100 for 2 months	100 for 3 months +

The company is requesting two more FtF experts to help with other phases of the business and market expansion. They are expanding the numbers of crops processed.

^a Of the seven volunteers interviewed in the Caucasus, four indicated a maximum length over two weeks would eliminate them from the volunteer pool
^b Data provided by ACDI/VOCA Washington, D.C. staff

Indications are that about one-half of the volunteer experts are full-time employees and an absence of over 17 days might be difficult for them. The percentage of volunteers fielded by Partners of the Americas in the Caribbean and Latin America who are employed or manage farms is even greater. Other reasons given for assignments to remain around 17 days included time away from the family and difficulty to remain in an assignment for over two weeks. If a minimum time over the current average (17 days) is introduced, the numbers of volunteers in the active pool would be reduced and the result would be a larger dependence on retired volunteers. Active work force members are considered essential to provide “cutting edge” technology.

2. PVO Performance

2.1 Field Offices

Field offices of FtF programs are sometimes single purpose and often shared with other projects of the FtF implementer. Over the course of the implementation period there have been 34 FtF offices established. Some of these offices are shared with other projects or other donor organizations. Some are just one person working out of a house; others have 10 people with all the amenities of a full-blown office. The size of the FtF program in a country is the main determinant of whether there is a joint or individual office for the program.

As country staffs receive training and experience, the field office can be a good source of information transfer. Some field office staffs have excellent computer skills and are very comfortable using the World Wide Web to obtain information for clients. Many examples exist where a host needed additional information and the field office staff was able to obtain the information through the Internet. The presence of Internet facilities is essential to gain maximum value from field staff. Field staff should be selected depending on their ability and expertise in agriculture, their knowledge of English, ability with computers (and Internet) and the desire and ability to work with people.

2.2 Information and Communication Technology. (ITC)

PVOs who have not developed the capability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders should do so. Stakeholders would include USAID, Missions, and other program implementers, support organizations, past and presently active host organizations, recruiters and past and present active volunteers. Those who do not have web sites that are easily accessible to volunteers and hosts should consider developing one.

Most PVOs provide information to volunteers on their assignments including specific technical data, as required. In some instances, partner organizations include research institutes (e.g. the Nigerian Horticultural Research Institute and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, which are providing information support to FtF volunteers in Nigeria). More might be done in the general area of ICT in support of volunteer assignments, particularly as individual volunteers may have limited knowledge of recent developments in technologies and practices relating specifically to the countries/regions in which they are serving. Volunteers themselves could be invited to devote time

before, during and after their field assignments to acquainting themselves and the host organizations with available information in specific areas. The World Wide Web is an obvious source and the web sites of the PVOs might provide links to useful websites related to specific types of assignments. The web could assist volunteers before and after their field assignments, but connectivity is often a serious problem in several of the countries in which volunteers serve. As an additional service, PVOs might explore the feasibility of developing sets of CD ROMs relating to specific topics and regions. In some instances, much of the information may already be available in a readily accessible format from the International Agricultural Research Centers or other agricultural development organizations. A portion of a volunteer's time could be devoted to bringing host organization staff up to speed in creatively using the CD ROMs (in the case of organizations that have access to computers/DVD players). DVDs or videos might also be prepared of lectures on a standard set of subjects (accounting, book keeping, business planning, etc.) that could take a portion of the burden off of volunteers with teaching assignments, allowing more time for individual consultations and gaining a better understanding of the local situation. Some volunteers may not be accomplished lecturers or be somewhat difficult to understand, but quite effective otherwise.

Ideally, ICT facilities should be interactive, both allowing access to information and empowering recipients to act on the information obtained. Might it be possible in the not too distant future for farmer groups in Africa to access information on improved maize varieties and be able to order small quantities of seed for testing on line (using their own group account) and have that delivered to their village? Can FtF volunteers help to make this a reality? A preliminary exploration of possibilities by one or more of the PVOs in collaboration with the IARCs and other agencies should provide answers to these questions.

A larger issue is how to quickly identify a range of improved technologies/practices in specific area/commodities, including marketing/processing options that have the potential to significantly improve value added, reduce costs, increase profits, etc. There should be a range of support services for volunteers in their area of expertise. ICT is only a part of it. IARC's can play a major role in their respective areas. There are networks for virtually all the areas that volunteers operate in. PVOs should identify and plug into these networks as part of development of a sub-sector strategy for a specific commodity or country. Some former volunteers are already well plugged into these networks and might assist via e-mail to PVO field staff, partners and new volunteers.

More generally, EGAT might explore a series of partner arrangements in the general area of ICT between FtF and projects/programs that are attempting to bridge the digital divide, some of which are supported by USAID.

2.3 Field Staff

Team members were struck by the high quality of the staff in all the field offices visited, perhaps more than any other element, except for the quality of the volunteers themselves. Much of the program's success can be attributed to skilled field staffs. This is a strong argument for avoiding major discontinuities in program funding, if at all possible, since a hiatus would almost certainly result in the loss of some of the best staff.

Implementers' field staffs have been most effective when they have had a long-term involvement with the program. Even one full-time staff with the ability to establish and maintain good relationships and networks can field 15 to 20 volunteers annually. Such staffs have also been able to provide some technical assistance in advance of fielding a volunteer and continue to assist after the volunteer has gone. This relationship has often continued through several volunteers who have worked with the host. In some instances, this relationship has practically become an informal extension service. FtF field staffs have advised hosts in planning, marketing, association leadership development as well as in production and new technology introduction. Field staffs in some countries utilize the World Wide Web in obtaining up-to-date information for hosts. Although this assistance is not separately assessed, it should be given consideration.

FtF activities that tend to excel are those that place a great deal of responsibility on field staffs. The best performing field staffs are well qualified in their field and serve both a technical and translator's role. In the ideal scenario, the field staff will make the initial contact with a host and identify the type of assistance needed. Following identification, field staff will complete a financial assessment of the potential host to determine its viability, level of potential host contribution and thus project sustainability. After this is done, a volunteer is selected who can provide the assistance needed and who will work with field staff in carrying out the assignment.

After the volunteer departs, the field staff member continues to support the host through follow-up activities and the completion of impact assessment surveys with hosts six to twelve months after the assignment. In many countries field staffs carry out the entire program with some oversight from a regional director. In some countries staff members have been employed to work with volunteers in a particular region. In Azerbaijan, for example, there has been an employee working in the northern region and in the southern region – a combination that has been very effective. Such a system enables the FtF country employee to maintain contact with the host and serve as a communication linkage between the host and the volunteer expert.

Irina Eremciuc manages the Moldova FtF Program. She holds a degree in International Law and has 6 years experience working with the Farmer-to-Farmer Program. Formerly with ACDI/VOCA 1997-1999, she has managed the Moldova operations since January 2002. Oleg Brinza, Senior Project Coordinator, holds a Degree in English and has studied further at the Academy of Economic Studies. He joined CNFA in August 2000 having formerly worked with Agroindbank and EC TACIS. Emil Darii, Project Coordinator, has a degree from Bowling Green State University in Public Administration and a degree in International Economics. He joined CNFA in November 2001. Serghei Gulceac, Project Coordinator joined CNFA in July 2002, and holds degrees in Business Management and in International Economics. There is one support staff person, Olga Sainciuc. The entire local staff is English speaking and three are tri-lingual.

Paid Local Staff. The FtF Program is carried out very effectively with major reliance on paid local staff in over 80% of all countries of FtF operation. Using various combinations of American, often local hire, and local staff, Russia and NIS Programs have matured to the point where local staffs carry out all phases of the program including preparation of scopes of work, reports, budgets and baseline surveys ahead of volunteer arrival. Every country in the NIS region has a trained local staff that maintains an effective follow-up of the host and volunteers after the assignment.

Reliance on NGOs. Some implementers rely

on sub-contracts with NGOs for in-country program management. Success depends on the vision, competence and commitment of the local NGO. In these cases FtF administrative funds are provided. These funds are a critical element, which have permitted the NGOs to furnish FtF host organizations with on-going technical and organizational support. The NGOs have facilitated the placement of FtF volunteers and created the opportunities to leverage funding/materials support from other entities. Such arrangements, where the NGO is already involved in working in a particular sub-sector and knows local host organizations, should increasingly be guided by and grow out of sub sector strategies.

FtF working through an NGO partner could also be problematic, as other priorities can take precedent over the FtF program priorities. In Jamaica, Land O'Lakes tapped a local Foundation to manage the program at the field level. They were responsible for locating hosts, developing scopes of work and monitoring progress. Unfortunately, the NGO staff did not believe in the viability or effectiveness of the FtF Program. They had their own development methodologies that were not successfully adapted to manage a volunteer based program. This partnership ultimately failed and Land O'Lakes was forced to start anew with local full-time staff and a field office. This new arrangement has proven much more effective, however there was an extreme disconnect between the first three years and the last three years of the program. This leaves overall program results somewhat in question.

Unpaid Volunteer Coordinators. One implementer in Latin America relies on unpaid or part-time staff and volunteer committees to administer and support the FtF program. Success depends largely on the personal sacrifice of the exceptional individuals who serve as country FtF volunteer coordinators. The level of FtF activity from country to country is dictated by the degree of commitment of the local NGO chapter, and the level of involvement and breadth of experience of stateside counterpart chapters.

The largest and most active Partners of the Americas FtF Programs in Latin America are in countries where the local coordinator receives a part-time salary. The evaluation team believes that adequate compensation for the time spent on FtF business and basic office infrastructure will make the system more resilient and results more consistent.

Implementers in the Latin American Region could improve program management and enhance impact of volunteer interventions by investing in minimal necessary in-country infrastructure and employing/compensating local staff. Relying wholly on under-funded subcontracted NGOs or part-time coordinators or volunteers who are obliged to use personal or borrowed space, phones, computers, and vehicles, limits the capability of in-country staff to promote the program, identify new hosts, support the volunteers in the field and fulfill reporting and ME& I requirements. As FtF moves toward emphasizing measurement of sector impact, volunteer managers will need to be afforded more opportunities for impact assessment training. Traveling from the United States to verify host surveys leaves little time for the home office staff to do analysis. The evaluators could already see big differences in sector indicators between those that have field staff trained to collect and analyze data on a regular basis and those that try and analyze field data in the home office.

FtF works best when run by full time experienced field staff. Part-time or volunteer staffs have also proven to be effective, however burnout or turnover under that management structure seems more likely. It may be difficult for a part-time or volunteer manager to devote the time it takes to research and develop a sector or regional strategy. A general lack of resources can also prove problematic for programs managed by volunteer staff.

Training of Field Staff. The FtF guidelines for impact assessment are being used and followed, but too often without a clear understanding of their purpose and consequently how to use them effectively. Even though the PVO implementers contributed to the design of these guidelines, some of the field or in some cases headquarter staff that have been given the responsibility to gather the data to measure impact have neither been adequately trained or understand their use. This may be due to the effort it requires to train field staff in data analysis. These are examples of why local staff requires ongoing training that includes monitoring, an awareness of data gathering instruments, and the development of a system of measurements and approaches that help support the programs overall monitoring goals. In this regard, overall program success is frequently linked to the training that the staff receives.

One alternative to consider is contracting out ex post impact sector assessments to professionals in country, perhaps coordinated regionally. This alternative would probably increase program costs.

2.4 Hosts

Working with hosts is an integral part of the overall management of the country program. Skillful country staffs are needed to select hosts who will benefit from the contributions of volunteers. Hosts are identified in a variety of ways, depending on the country and the state of development of the FtF program. Some of the identifications methods utilized are:

- Through local media including television, newspapers and radio;
- Active promotion of program by FtF coordinators/country staff in seminars for government institutions, donor agencies and the NGO community;
- Through other donor programs that need services of an expert;
- From other NGO, PVO and private sector programs;
- From USAID projects that are aware of the availability of an expert that may assist their project;
- Field staff attending relevant seminars or association meetings; and
- Through referrals from a previous host.

Training African Women

Recognizing that women produce over 70% of the locally consumed food in Africa, Winrock ensures that gender concerns are addressed in their programs. More than one-third of FtF beneficiaries have been women. For example, food-processing expert John Marenic helped two groups of women farmers in Oyo State to decrease their post harvest losses and improve fruit and vegetable processing. Marenic helped 50 women to resuscitate a fruit juice processing plant that had been abandoned due to bankruptcy. As a result of his assistance, the women started to produce fruit juice again, and received an \$800 grant for packaging materials. He helped another group of 45 female farmers to develop a tomato and pepper puree cooperative.

As the FtF program gains recognition in a country, organizations request FtF volunteer assistance. In well-established FtF programs the demand for technical assistance often far exceeds the implementer's budget for volunteers. In Bolivia ACDI/VOCA has as many as 400 requests for assistance annually, but can only field 20 volunteers under the current budget. Partners in Nicaragua and Bolivia similarly have requests from new and long-term collaborating organizations for many more volunteers than their budgets will permit. The technical assistance might complement an NGO's primary activity. For example the Eurasia Foundation, which provides grants and loans but has little expertise in agriculture, requested experts to help their agricultural business clients. Alternatively, a project or donor agency might request specialized expertise beyond that of its own staff technicians, as illustrated by the integration of FtF dairy volunteers in the Finnish PRODEGA beef/dairy project in Nicaragua.

An important criteria for host selection is that the host be willing to share the technical assistance, as the time of a volunteer is best used where the results may be multiplied by wider diffusion of improved practices. Successful hosts are those who do not just implement new ideas, but who also share the information or technologies with those around them. A host in Eastern Georgia has utilized several volunteers in developing new varieties and has shared the expertise (varieties) with 67 other farmers in the valley. In northern Azerbaijan, a potato expert worked in an upland village with a host who arranged collaboration with two other villages. Two farmers from each village worked with the host and the expert to disseminate techniques for propagating disease free potatoes. Because of the sharing, a significant increase in potato production and profit has resulted.

Hosts for FtF are often enterprises working with other donor activities. The FtF Program provides many organizations experts who can help with enterprise success. It is important for the FtF country offices to "network" with other organizations to see where the input from a volunteer expert would be of benefit.

Hosts frequently provide accommodations for volunteers. Home stay arrangements are common, especially in remote regions. Some volunteers like the idea of a home stay and this type of interaction should be encouraged. With home stays, the conditions of the home environment should be explained to the volunteer and the translator should be involved in the stay as well.

2.5 Institutional relationships

2.5.1 Networking

FtF can serve a useful role to the donor community by seeking new "host enterprises" and helping them get started. Once they become viable, other donor agencies such as credit programs can enter in with complementary activities. By good networking with donor organizations, FtF country programs can take the lead in promoting promising enterprises within the donor community. Similarly when FtF is known to the donor agencies, it can provide specialized volunteer assistance to supplement other donor resources. For maximum benefit to host enterprises, FtF must be able to provide initial assistance to get a program started and continued technical support to keep the program viable.

2.5.2 USAID Missions

It is important to develop a good working relationship with the USAID Mission early in project development. By coordinating with the USAID Mission it becomes possible and practical to provide programming that meets FtF and USAID Mission objectives. In addition, some volunteers can assist with other USAID projects, reducing TA costs. As was noted in one USAID funded project, an FtF volunteer can often be fielded more quickly than a consultant can be contracted. When considering the importance of networking, the first good contact to make is with the USAID Mission.

The following Mission survey was sent to 42 Missions that have had FtF volunteers working in their country during the last three years. The survey was emailed in July, with 13 responding and again in October with four responding. When the evaluators went to visit 14 countries they again requested a response. Twenty-two Missions responded overall, representing over 1400 volunteer assignments or about half of the total. Most disappointing was the lack of response of Missions such as Russia (444 volunteers), India (104 volunteers) and several others. The general attitude seems to be, “we don’t have enough time for that Washington program”. One Mission FtF coordinator refused to even look at the evaluation form handed to him by the evaluator. Fortunately this was not the attitude among the majority of the Missions contacted.

FtF USAID MISSION SURVEY

1—Very effective 2—Effective 3—Somewhat Effective	4—Not effective 5—Unable to measure
Indicator	Rating
1. Overall Performance	2.1
2. Results and Impact	2.0
3. Implementer’s Performance	1.9
4. Implementer’s Relations with Host Country	1.6
5. Implementer’s Coordination with USAID	2.4
6. Implementer’s Performance of Program Monitoring and Follow up	1.8
7. Quality of FtF Volunteer	2.2
8. Management and Administrative Functions of Implementer	2.0
9. Management and Administrative Functions of the Washington based FtF Office	1.8

The following question are Yes or No.

Are FtF Assignments long enough?	8 Yes	2 No
Do volunteers have access to adequate technical information?	8 Yes	2 No
Do Implementers plan and coordinate with on-going Mission activities to avoid duplication?	8Yes	2 No
Do Implementers arrange briefing and debriefings with USAID/Embassy staff during each visit?	7Yes	4 No
Does the Implementer integrate their activities in you country with the Mission SOs?	8Yes	4 No
Does the Mission want language in the next agreements that would allow for Mission buy-ins?	4Yes	7 No
Would Mission be interested in being designated as a focus country?	8Yes	1 No

Those Missions that responded said, “great program”, “appreciated by counterparts”, “long lasting”, “small business focus” and rated the program as effective. There was also plenty of evidence that the relationships between the implementers varies and needs improvement. There were comments like “we should review the work plans before they are finalized”, “too much emphasis on numbers and not enough on impact”, “missed opportunities for collaboration,” “strength of program varies with PVO manager” and “do not know coordinator”.

Mission interest varies a great deal. Generally, there is someone on the staff who keeps up with FtF activities. The implementer arranges for debriefings and meetings with volunteers when possible, though not often. There seems to be a low level of long-term collaboration or planning, many Missions provide periodic feedback and requests for assistance on a case-by-case basis. Buy-ins have not been a real consideration for most Missions. There is little familiarity with the FtF Program. Mission staffs simply do not know what the program is all about. The AID/W FtF Office could promote the program or visit Missions where volunteer programs have done little. The FtF coordinator’s office could take a proactive role in promoting the program amongst the Missions. The FtF coordinator should travel to key Missions to explain the program to Mission staff. At a minimum there should be an email explaining the program to all Missions once a year.

Conclusions: Every implementer must make an effort to collaborate with every Mission in all the countries where they are working. The implementers should give more attention to developing strategies at the sector levels by collaborating with Mission SO teams and utilizing their analytical capacity that can provide a context for the identification of priority activities. PVO implementers could start with informal talks with the contractors/consultants who are working on various USAID funded projects. These are the people that are most likely to respond to the opportunities for using volunteers. In all instances it is recommended that more attention be given to ex ante impact assessment and in general to the decision making processes involved in defining the allocation of volunteers with a view to giving attention to the areas where the impact potential is estimated to be the greatest.

Every visit to a country by one of the PVO home office staff should begin, and maybe end with a debriefing of country Mission staff. Frequent face-to-face visits with Mission staff by volunteers would be a plus.

2.5.3 Institutional Partnerships

Institutions consisting of both donor organizations and country entities (ministries, banking, research, other) are important to FtF as assistance can be provided in several ways. The Eurasia Foundation makes loans to some agribusinesses but has no staff in agriculture. They call on FtF in many countries to assist when expertise is needed in agriculture. FtF has provided expertise in leasing, for example, to help the Eurasia Foundation loan program. In addition, FtF has identified prospective candidates for the Eurasia Foundation program through some of their exploratory FtF assignments. The USDA Marketing Assistance Program has built on projects, which were identified by FtF volunteers, and the reciprocal is true in that FtF has provided expertise to enterprises working with USDA.

FtF has assisted many institutional programs as well. The USDA Market Assistance Program (MAP) in Armenia has identified sites within their projects for volunteers. FtF expert help with a variety of needs such as quality control, leasing, processing of food and other areas of expertise. FtF has worked with the Academy of Agriculture by providing volunteers to do “needs assessments.” The program has provided specialized expertise (like plant protection and dairy assistance) and recently delivered a series of presentations on hazard analysis and critical control programs as related to food safety. This program was also presented to other public and private organizations.

In Nicaragua the Partners FtF program has collaborated extensively with numerous public institutions, including the National Agrarian University, the Rural Development Institute (IDR) and the Nicaraguan Agriculture/Livestock Technological Institute (INTA). In Santa Cruz, Bolivia

NIGERIA

Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF) has directly supported USAID/Nigeria’s strategic objective to strengthen institutional capacity for economic reform and enhance capacity to revive agricultural growth. FtF volunteers have helped to:

- strengthen NGO and government extension services;
- establish and strengthen cooperatives;
- improve production, post harvest handling, processing, and marketing through technology transfer and training; and
- expand farmers’ access to credit and grants.

Between February 2001 and September 2002, the FtF Team completed 112 volunteer assignments and worked with more than 91 host organizations. The FtF Program has worked in more than 20 states of Nigeria and all six geopolitical zones. These assignments have directly benefited more than 4,600 men and 2,600 women

Volunteers have worked with more than 30 private enterprises to increase productivity and efficiency. Aquaculture specialist Esau Arana helped a female farmer in Ijebu-Ode to construct catfish ponds. He also taught her how to grow catfish fingerlings. The volunteer’s training increased her revenue by 60%. The farm’s catfish sales increased from US\$1,900 to US\$3,200 in 6 months. The host is now self-reliant in fingerling production, which reduced input costs by 30%. Her success has created a new awareness among Nigeria’s unemployed youth regarding opportunities in fish farming. Students from the university have visited the farm to study the technology. To date, three aquaculture host enterprises increased their combined number of fish ponds from 3 to 14 with an increased investment of \$8,300. Ife Central Fish Farmers Association formed a new cooperative of 27 private fish farmers as a result of an FtF assignment.

ACDI/VOCA FtF volunteers provided critical organizational and technical advice to the parastatal CRS, the regional seed certification committee, which facilitated an expansion of its services to Bolivian farmers, and opened export markets.

Conclusion: FtF must network with many institutions and can benefit by developing institutional relationships with public and private institutions. FtF can fill a gap in expertise (such as providing an expert to a Eurasia Foundation loan client) or by providing an identified client to an institution.

2.5.4 Formation of Partnerships with Private Sector

FtF has been successful in building many relationships in carrying out their activities. Partnerships created in a country have been especially beneficial in helping to multiply the impact of the expertise of the volunteer. In the Caucasus, FtF has continued to work with two private sector firms that were created by USAID projects. One example is Horizon Seeds. The company personnel benefit by this relationship as they strengthen their knowledge base from the volunteer while working with an FtF client. In Armenia, the program supports the VISTAA Expert Center by contracting each year for services from the center. The Center provides experts to assist an FtF expert at a host site. The VISTAA expert benefits from the knowledge of the FtF expert and this relationship between VISTAA and FtF has helped develop significant capacity for consulting and project management services to other donor organizations and private sector organizations. The program has supported Credit Agro in Azerbaijan and Rural Credit Cooperatives in Georgia and helped these institutions develop into successful credit institutions. Sixteen FtF volunteers assisted the National Rural Credit System by providing computer assistance, how to maintain a loan portfolio, transfer of information, updating records, collateral appraisal and cost accounting. The National Rural Credit system is successful and now employs 55 staff in six licensed branches. The system will continue carrying on credit operations when FtF assistance is no longer available. In Nicaragua grants from USAID for expansion of co-op milk processing plants were obtained with FtF volunteers' assistance. The strengthened co-ops were able to negotiate a 20% higher base price for raw milk from the major intermediary purchasers because of improved milk quality. This higher base price was estimated by the collaborating donor project to have generated \$3,375,000 in additional income for all dairy producers in the Departments of Boaco and Chontales.

2.5.5 Financial Participation Of Public And Private Organizations

FtF implementers have made numerous alliances in the countries where they work. Winrock International has worked with the Private Farmers Association (a parastatal) and many small businesses in writing scopes of work and in business plan preparation. In Uzbekistan, a parastatal organization the Andijan Networking Center has identified hosts, written scopes of work and conducted local impact surveys. In cooperation with the Ohio State University an 18-month work experience was arranged for 18 Uzbek farmers and students identified by the Networking Center. VISTAA Expert Center in Armenia has networked with FtF and, because of their current capacity and ability, now contracts with other private and donor organizations at a level exceeding \$60,000 per year. The recently funded USAID SAVE (Support for Value Added Enterprises) is planning to utilize 15 to 20 FtF volunteers in the next two years to assist with the implementation of the project.

The FtF program has utilized many combinations of private and public activity. In Tabasco, Mexico, the local NGO, ATCO, which administers FtF under contract with LOL was able to obtain grants from the Mexican Government for over \$50,000 in processing equipment for the organic chocolate producers group with which it works. In Nicaragua FtF volunteers assisted dairy co-ops in writing successful applications for USAID grants totaling \$255,000 for infrastructure expansion.

The following table shows the funds being generated by FtF bringing in other donors and indigenous organizations.

Summary

Organization	Total funds generated
Winrock	\$963,905
ACDI/VOCA	\$683,000
Land O' Lakes	\$ 74,245
CNFA	\$ 78,100
Partners	\$464,425
Totals	\$2,263,675

The implementers have generated a great deal of funding for their activities outside of the project. They leverage resources from other donors, from local entrepreneurs, from U.S. business, other PVOs and from forming partnerships to enhance the impact of their efforts.

There are some natural divisions of expertise best met by joining forces with both public and private organizations. In some countries the government programs have not kept pace with private sector development and lack effectiveness.

In many African and in several other countries, key public sector agencies (e.g. extension, research and marketing) are in collapse and private sector is very weak or non-existent. A more effective public sector is regarded as essential to spread of civil society and the provision of services outside the environs of capital cities and major centers where private sector agencies, other than NGOs hesitate to venture. Many countries do, however, need grades and standards and “rule of law” to provide an orderly environment for private sector development. In such cases, the utilization of volunteers to help develop grades, standards, food safety guidelines, weights and balances and laws for creation of associations can be enhanced by working in the public sector. Working with both the private and public sector makes good sense from the standpoint of “good communications” which is necessary as a country moves along the development path. FtF has been able to provide a good blend of working with public and private organizations and should continue in this direction.

Conclusion: Participation by the public and private sectors should be an integral goal of FtF programs. The majority of projects are expected to be in the private sector but communicating with the public organizations is essential as countries develop a strong private sector. If attention is only given to working with private entities and NGOs, who will be providing oversight? The presence of an effective public sector needs to develop if an orderly private sector is going to thrive. Many

projects might prove effective if done on a joint basis (private and public) so that common goals can be attained and public “rent seekers” can be dealt with at the same time.

2.5.6 Consortiums

The creation of consortiums in the NIS has been an effective strategy for carrying out the FtF program. For example, the Farmer-to-Farmer Caucasus Program is designed to strengthen the capacity of host organizations at three levels of the “building blocks of sustainability,” including (1) the firm level, (2) the agricultural support organization level, and (3) the financial institution level.^c The program adheres to its people-to-people identity by providing individual experts who work “side by side” with their host counterpart. The program also strengthens rural credit financial institutions and assists host in accessing financing and attracting investments. The implementer of the consortium maintains offices in Tblisi, Georgia; Yerevan, Armenia; and Baku, Azerbaijan. During the evaluation period (first 33 months of the program through June 30, 2002) the consortium fielded 161 volunteers who have completed 211 assignments through June, 2002 are divided between three major program objective areas as follows:

Program Objectives	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Georgia	Total assignments	Percent
Private Entreprises	35	65	50	150	71%
Organizations and NGOs	22	12	7	41	19%
Credit and Finance	1	3	16	20	10%
TOTALS	58	80	73	211	100%

Recent assignments looked at a market chain approach, which evaluates the chain of supply from the producer to the processor (grain to shelf) and final user of the product. In some cases the processors have had problems with quality or quantity of product delivered and asked for FtF expert help to provide training for farmers delivering product.

How good are the Consortiums?

The apparent confusion was created by a request in the NIS RFA to improve capacity building efforts among U.S. PVOs. Supported by the 1996 evaluation, which recommended FtF focus volunteer assignment geographically, the NIS RFA “strongly encourages experienced PVOs that have successfully completed one grant with PVC to partner with another U.S. PVO with international development experience but no prior grant experience with PVC. The intent to use the strong base of experienced PVOs by PVC to work with new PVOs to build the capacity of the PVO community to implement the FtF Program was admirable. But it did not happen.

Three PVOs, (Winrock, ACDI/VOCA and Land O’Lakes) were working in Russia at the time the RFA was issued. The RFA limited one PVO per region, FtF management had divided Russia into

^c From the IMPLEMENTER EVALUATION REPORT of the Caucasus Farmer to Farmer Program, October 1, 1999 – June 30, 2002

four regions. Another phrase in the 1998 NIS RFA stated “BHR/PVC encourages applicants to pool their efforts through subgrant partnering with other qualified U.S. PVOs to maximize their comparative advantages to meet the needs of the proposed program”.

Apparently little or no effort was made by the experienced PVOs to find others with little or no grant experience. The experience PVO formed three consortiums in the NIS to implement the FtF program.

The advantage of this consortium:

- a. Each PVO brings a number of years experience to the program.
- b. The expertise and volunteer database of each organization can be brought to bear to develop a uniform impact assessment system.
- c. The consortium was able to field a large number of volunteers into three geographic regions of Russia and was able to utilize experience Russian staff to administer the program.
- d. The consortium set goals and objectives.

The disadvantages of the consortiums:

- a. No new PVOs were brought into the FtF Program.
- b. Financing and data become mixed so that it becomes difficult to attribute successful impact to a particular implementer. The PVOs effect on the program is aggregated into one report.

Conclusion: The consortium in the Caucasus between ACDI/VOCA as implementer and Land O’ Lakes and WINROCK works very well. The work is going smoothly and there is a sharing of information and volunteers. Although the implementers work together well, either of the three could probably operate an effective program. Thus one has to wonder if there is any overriding reason for dealing with consortiums of this type. A more logical consortium is one in which a major implementer would be working with a Historical Black Land Grant College/University in making a strong effort to find more minorities for the program.

Recommendation: Although some consortiums have been successful, it appears that each implementer could carry out the program alone. It is therefore suggested that future consortiums be composed of a major implementer and subgrants with historical black universities and other minority organizations.

2.5.7 Development of Minority PVO and MSIs Capacity in the U.S.

Small businesses and minority organizations

Over the life of the project the PVO implementers have provided 14 subgrants to Smaller/Minority-based organizations providing \$1,806,451, of which \$888,964 has been disbursed.

Subgrants Made to Smaller/Minority- Based Organizations						
Organizations receiving grants	Organization Awarding Grant	Date Awarded	Amount Awarded	Expenditures to date	FtF volunteers Fielded	Activities Undertaken
International Indian Treaty Council	Land O'Lakes	October, 1996	\$82,893	\$87,312.00	60	
Federation of Southern Cooperatives	Land O'Lakes	October, 2001	\$89,164	\$0.00	0	
Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (BARA) University of Arizona	ACDI/VOCA	9/30/96-9/29/01	\$700,000	\$696,122.60	44 (Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia)	
Lincoln University	ACDI/VOCA	6/10/2002	\$20,000	N/a	1	Minority volunteer candidates, databases are being built for placements over seas
Tuskegee University	ACDI/VOCA	4/18/2002	\$20,000	N/a	0	
Tennessee State University	ACDI/VOCA	4/29/2002	\$20,000	N/a		
North Carolina A&T State University	ACDI/VOCA	4/26/2002	\$20,000	N/a		
OIC International	Partners	10/1/2001	\$183,200	\$52,467	3	
Florida A & M University	CNFA	June, 2002	\$99,830	\$6,864.00	1	
Mercy Corps	Winrock	October, 1999	\$344,992	\$100,927.00		
Daikhanlar Limited Liability Partnership*	Winrock	October, 1999	\$93,800	\$9,428.00		
Tajik Public committee for the Exchange of Students*	Winrock	October, 1999	\$31,200	\$19,905.00		
Self-Help International**	Winrock	October, 2001	\$33,600	\$7,200.00	25	
Federation of Southern Cooperatives	Winrock	October, 2001	\$67,772	\$3,022.00	1	
Totals			1,806,451	\$983,247.60	107	
*Local NGOs that identify hosts design and prepare SOWS, and arrange for volunteer assignments, but do not technically field volunteers						
**Self-Help received a subgrant in 2001. Prior to that, Self-Help was reimbursed on a per volunteer basis for expenses.						

The initial set of subgrants made between 1996 and 1999 was awarded to implementing organizations such as the International Indian Treaty Council, the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, Mercy Corps, Self Help International and two overseas PVOs. These grants were primarily to aid the PVO implementer to recruit volunteers in the United States or to work overseas to develop scopes of work, to take village surveys and to help with impact measurement. Albeit these subgrantees successfully completed their activities, they did not learn full spectrum of skills or develop a roster of volunteers adequate to implement the FtF program independently.

USDA and USAID agreed to extra funding for special initiative to increase participation by minority farmers, organizations, and 1890 Land Grant colleges and Universities. This initiative has been reiterated in the 2002 Farm Bill. FtF responded by encouraging these minority institutions to gain experience and build their capacity to implement the FtF Program by working as subcontractors to the larger and experienced PVOs. USAID should reserve \$400,000 per year to expand the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSI). MSI's are defined as consisting of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the FtF Program.

The following organizations through amendments to their cooperative agreements funded five capacity building grants to MSI's in FY 2001:

ACDI/VOCA: Four MSI Universities, Lincoln, North Carolina A&T, Tennessee and Tuskegee, receive an annual capacity building grant to increase institutional capability to implement international volunteer projects. Funds cover the cost associated with recruiting African-American farmers and agriculture experts to serve as volunteers.

CNFA: One MSI, Florida A&M University, has received a grant to recruit minorities as volunteers, provide access to training materials, and learn about the systems used to develop scopes of work, impact measurement and program assessment. FAMU will also assume responsibility for overseeing and directing several FtF projects through periodic field visits.

Results: Each MSI has identified a campus recruiter and is publicizing overseas volunteer opportunities among the extended university community. Staff is being trained at CNFA and ACDI/VOCA and at offices overseas through formal and informal orientation programs. Databases are being completed and list of potential volunteers developed. Several FtF volunteers are being sent from minority institutions.

OTHER MINORITY ORGANIZATIONS: In further response to the FY 2001 FtF special initiative, the Farmer-to-Farmers Program funded capacity building grants to minority-based organizations by amending the following organizations cooperative agreements:

Land O'Lakes/Winrock: Both LOL and Winrock have awarded capacity building subgrants to the Federation Of Southern Cooperatives (FSC), a 35-year-old organization of minority southern farmers, to develop FtF programs. Efforts are well underway to develop a recruiting system, complete overseas assignments, and to implement program impact and measurement activities. Two

FSC employees will travel to Jamaica as program volunteers to learn the program first hand. Plans are for FSC to recruit eight African-American volunteers in Southern Africa and the Caribbean for assignments in CY 2003.

Partners of the Americas: For over 30 years, the Opportunities Industrialization Centers International (OICI) has trained the economically underprivileged youth and adults who live in developing countries. Partners is implementing the FtF Program in Ghana, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire through OICI. OICI has used its capacity building grant to develop FtF Program Manuals and volunteer recruitment programs and to learn how to use impact and measurement devices in Africa and Haiti. They have participated in FtF training workshops held by Partners in Ghana and have visited potential sites in three African focus countries.

The FY 2002 Farm Bill places a special emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean Basin and expands the definition of those that can carry out the program to specifically include HBCUs.

Conclusion: As a part of the evaluation, team members visited several of the minority institutions participating in the capacity building programs and found an enthusiasm for the FtF Program and an expectation that minorities can and will participate in future FtF programs that are assisting in the development of Africa and the Caribbean. However **we do not believe** that the MSI's are experienced enough to directly compete with the experienced PVOs as primary grantees in African countries. If left to compete with those PVOs that have been working in the program for over 15 years they certainly will not be competitive and will see the efforts to build their capacity as a wasted two years. On the other hand we **do believe** that the Federation of Southern Cooperative and OICI are capable, especially partnering with the appropriate experienced PVOs, and ready to compete. They have had on the ground experience in Africa and the Caribbean for over 20 years and two years of capacity building experience under the current grants.

Recommendations:

1. **Other Smaller/Minority-Based Organizations--**These organizations should be encouraged to submit proposals under this RFA either as the primary grantee or as a subgrantee with other eligible organizations. Based on the capacity building experiences gained during the last two years the evaluation team believes that these organizations will be capable of providing the leadership to develop and expand their program activities to Africa and the Caribbean. We would expect that some MSIs would be subgrantees.
2. **MSIs--**The evaluation team proposes EGAT reserve a minimum of \$400,000 per year, potentially LOP \$2,000,000, to expand the participation of MSIs. The five MSIs participating in the capacity building program are making a serious effort to prepare their institutions to increase participation by minority farmers, in the FtF Program. In support of this effort by the minority institutions, EGAT should request applications from MSIs as prime grantees for the implementation of the program in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean Basin.

3. We recommend that the MSIs chose any country in these areas in which they have experience and want to work. Sub grants and partnerships between MSIs and other implementers should be encouraged.

3. Impact and Measurement

As a result of the 1996 NIS evaluation, USAID has collaborated with the PVO implementers to develop guidelines for indicator tables to measure program impact on host organizations. This was the first effort to determine how well the PVO partners are measuring impact at the field level. For four years systems have been developed, tested and put into place. This field evaluation examined how far the measurement system has come, looked at staff, training, data collection and analysis. The evaluation team determined if there would be an advantage to aggregating the databases and concentrating FtF assignments in specific sectors to make impact more meaningful.

The evaluation team visited five major regions in the program, 1) Africa, 2) the Caribbean, 3) Latin America, 4) Russia, and 5) the NIS States (including the Caucasus, Ukraine, Moldova and Kazakhstan) during the months of October and November 2002. We found great differences between the regions that affect programming, volunteer placement, impact measurement and the general overall success of the program. The following differences influence the numbers of volunteers going to the regions; the numbers of repeat volunteers, and the volunteers impact on the program:

1. **The Stage Of Development.** FtF activities are most successful in countries that have an environment suitable for development. These countries have key program policies in place, a target population that is ready for technological change and accessible markets. Also, governments that are stable and promoting peace and prosperity are much more likely to support the FtF Program.

For example, over the last few months, FtF activities experienced disruptions due to political unrest in Zimbabwe and the Ivory Coast. Over the last few years, programs in the West Bank, Cambodia, and Egypt have closed for a combination of reasons that are related to the development climate.

2. **Policies And Basic Services.** In many of the African and Caribbean countries volunteer assignments are aimed at providing services to hosts that the governments and the private sector cannot provide. These services include access to credit, improved technologies and markets. These services are often essential to the success of any training or technical assistance provided by the volunteers. Grassroots organizations often have limited capacity to access such services, and in the absence of other partners (NGOs, projects, government agencies, and etc.) the burden of making the necessary connections and arrangements falls upon FtF or simply does not happen. This reality has significant programming implications and is a critical consideration in determining the extent to which FtF chooses to work directly with grassroots organizations.

Many of the volunteers have worked with agriculture processors, bankers and businesses providing markets, credit and supplies to grassroots organizations. Many of the volunteers fielded in Africa and the Caribbean during the last six years worked on policy development and access to basic services. We expect that as the overall development environment improves, increased numbers of volunteers can be programmed for Africa and the Caribbean.

FtF has an important role to play in those areas where governments are struggling with how to operate under conditions of chronic stress. However, programming and strategy might have to be different than for other regions. Implementers could increasingly rely on working with partners as part of a sub sector strategy, rather than on their own. FtF volunteers might also collaborate with volunteers or consultants from developing countries with experience in dealing with such problems as hyperinflation and civil disorder.

In Russia and the NIS the FtF program has been very effective where policies and basic services are at least partially in place. Nearly 1,600 volunteer assignments over the last four years were programmed in accounting, planning and management activities. These volunteers worked in the private sector, associations, other donor agencies, private businesses and farmers. These sectors supported by the developing democratic governments have resulted in increase sales, revenue and job creation. From baseline studies, to implementation and follow-up surveys, positive results for the agriculture businesses resulted despite this being a period of economic downturn in many of the countries.

3.1 Program Impact

Measuring impact: The more experienced partners have implemented sophisticated development programs of which volunteer technical assistance is but one component. They are using the impact measurement systems developed in the Farmer-to-Farmer Program to quantify their returns on a sector basis. These implementers have not reached the point where they can measure internal rates of return but our examination of impact measurement systems would lead one to believe that they could provide positive rates of return in the future.

Approach: Implementers could give more attention to the development of Farmer-to-Farmer strategies at the country or sector level in certain geographical regions and within certain types of activities. Poor sector organization, lack of entrepreneurial skills and unfavorable policies or the political environment will hinder the implementers in their efforts. For example in Africa these factors make it difficult to project returns that justify the costs of activities carried out. But these issues plague all projects operating in that environment, so it is not necessarily a reason to exclude FtF from attempting to measure economic returns. This requirement could result in more serious programming and more concern for aggregate gains in commodity chains or a given target population depending on the approach that is taken. There certainly is a cost in measuring impact,

notably more effort up front on sub sector analysis, ex ante impact assessment and in more and better ME&I

Conclusion: Not all implementers are ready nor do they have the capacity for this degree of rigor in developing their programs. Given the highly desirable objectives of involving more MSIs in the program, MSIs may need more time to develop the capacity to compete. But the prospect of developing sector impact should be included in all proposals. Implementers may seek outside consultants or volunteers to carry out the analysis for programming the type of activities that generate significant and measurable economic and social returns.

3.2 Program Results

As noted above the macro-economic outputs of the FtF Program are difficult to measure. USAID has made a Herculean effort to develop guidelines for the Farmer-to-Farmer Program since the last evaluation in order to establish standards for measurement. We will discuss the effects of program impact based on the indicator tables later.

The overall goals set by Congress with the passage of the Farm Bill is clearly stated in Chapter 41-Agriculture trade development and assistance, Subchapter V-Farmer-to-Farmer Program "to further assist developing countries, middle-income countries, and emerging democracies to increase farm production and farm incomes". The five implementers have worked hard at all levels to establish their goals and objectives in concert with the Congressional Goal to impact populations, change lives and increase income, initially mostly at the farm level but more and more at the sector level. However, program inputs can be measured much more easily than outputs.

Implementers of USAID Farmer-to-Farmer Programs strongly believe in the value of FtF and committed to making it as effective as possible and are committed to impact assessment as a part of the program.

The previous evaluation recommended that the outputs go beyond merely anecdotal and general positive impressions to more precisely measuring impact. The USAID FtF Office responded holding a conference with all implementers to discuss indicators. The conference concluded by sending out guidelines that defines all tables and indicator sets, set standards for volunteer outputs, host assignments and program impacts. This guidance gave the implementers a system to work around in developing their own evaluation system. The evaluation system is based on:

- Host profiles
- Project Surveys
- Impact Analysis

Using this system the host country staff in Azerbaijan and Armenia were able to measure the impact on 101 projects across sectors with the following results:

Summary data regarding sales, revenue and job creation, from baseline and follow-up surveys show positive results for the hosts assisted (**includes 101 projects**). The following table shows baseline and follow-up comparison results for all volunteers (Azerbaijan and Armenia) to date. The results for cooperating hosts look very good and this is for a period of severe economic downturn in the countries^d.

Country	Base sales CY 2000	Survey sales CY 2002	Base Revenues CY 2000	Survey Revenues CY 2002	Base employees CY 2000	Survey employees CY 2002
Armenia	\$2,694,500	\$3,218,250	\$715,700	\$947,750	604	643
Gain(loss)		\$523,750		\$232,050		39
% gain/loss		+19%		+32%		+6%
Azerbaijan	\$913,876	\$1,272,577	\$287,375	\$452,319	419	431
Gain(loss)		\$358,701		\$164,944		12
% gain		+39%		+57%		+3%
Project totals	\$3,608,376	\$4,490,827	\$1,003,075	\$1,400,069	1023	1074
Gain		\$882,451		\$396,994		51
% gain		+24%		+40%		+5%

Although this is a limited sample from just two countries the table indicates the possibilities of impact measurement on a broad scale.

CNFA has clearly articulated the reasons they believe in the impact assessment systems they have developed. The systems help ensure:

1. **Accountability to volunteers**--Few volunteers are satisfied in going out and spending three week exchanging unfocused ideas with strangers. They want well thought out tasks to accomplish and want to know "what happened", i.e. the result.
2. **Accountability to USAID**. USAID/EGAT, USAID Field Missions and other donors consistently make it clear that FtF can be of significant value to them only to the extent that it can document impact.
3. **Accountability to Congress and to U.S. taxpayers**. Reporting to Congressional delegations, making public presentations
4. **Project Selection and Design**: CNFA uses the data to carefully evaluate candidate hosts to ensure that are creditworthy and effectively use FtF volunteer TA.
5. **Staff training**: CNFA provides staff training to raise their analytical abilities to improve staff performance in project design and evaluation.

All implementers are using similar vehicles to determine impact on their individual host activities. Winrock has excellent systems in place to measure impact, which start with the questionnaire used to recruit hosts and design the SOW. Six to twelve months after the volunteer leaves Winrock FtF field

^d Reference information from RAMP data and was provided by country staff and Rob Turner

staff conducts a detailed impact survey. This systematic process is usually concluded with a detailed analysis of the information and reported to AID in the six-month report. However all the measurement systems are at different degrees of development and operating under different approaches trying to reach the same goal, that is, to determine the success of the impact of the host activity.

3.3 Sector Impact

The evaluation team requested that the implementers select one sector per country and attempt to measure the impact on the sector. They were asked to list the data that is being gathered over the life of the project to measure quantitative impacts of activities at the sector level. The evaluation team was please with the results of this preliminary effort. Each implementer was able to select from each country that they were working in a sector activity and provide some impact indicators that indicated how effective the volunteers had been in that sector. Below are five examples:

Country	Sector Activity	Number of Assignments	Number of hosts	Selected Sector Impact Indicator	Implementer
Bangladesh	Poultry	17	11	Thousands of commercial poultry growers are buying quality day old chicks and balanced poultry feed. Six host were trained in the use of least cost feed formulations.	Winrock
Armenia	Dairy	14	14	Beginning in 1999 Caucasus FtF introduced artificial insemination and new genetics to goat herds. As a direct result of the volunteer's recommendations, USDA established a goat breeding center with more than \$300,000 in assistance. FtF has sent six volunteers to the centers to work on breed improvement, milk selection and cheese production. Cheese milk and goat sales have increased 29% (\$287,000) and host revenues have increased 38% (\$96,000) as a result of these interventions.	ACDI/VOCA
Moldova	Marketing Cooperatives	41--Total for country	9	Over 900 individual dairy producers increased monthly revenue by exploiting a stable market for their milk. One vegetable market cooperative increased sales by 5.6 times. Members of one honey marketing cooperative received monthly revenue from sales of over \$100 per person (average rural monthly salary is \$18).	CNFA
Jamaica	Marketing	9	1	Two hosts have developed new products. Shrimp are sold in packages labeled "Farm Grown". Product knowledge let to 10% increase farm efficiency, 20 new outlets and a 6,540% increase in farm revenues.	Land O'Lakes
El Salvador	Composting	8	5	31 organizations were trained in methods to produce compost from organic waste. 10% increase in income from the sale of vegetables grown using organic compost. Production of vegetables has increased 45% from the use of compost.	Partners

A problem of reporting impact. It should be noted from the table above that the implementers have a way to go in fulfilling the goals of the developers of the indicators. The idea was to develop baseline data with numbers either in terms of quantities produced or income from production. Then after the intervention, through surveys taken by the local, volunteers or US staff determine the difference in quantifiable terms and report the differences on an annual basis. From the table above it can be seen that estimating the change in percentage figures or stating impact in terms of "increase sales by 5 times" is frequently the norm. This is easier to do but is unquantifiable because it does not report the beginning or end points. For example increasing production from \$1 to \$5 or from \$100 to \$500 is a five-fold increase in income but the results are clearly different. The new tracking systems being implemented by the PVOs has just begun to solve the problem of data analysis.

Conclusions: The FtF Program should leave the current measurement impact and indicator system in place, and continue to encourage implementers to refine it, working towards developing an internal rate of return system focusing on a sector approach. The impacts of any one activity represent only a small portion of what the implementer is doing in the country. They may be having success in developing associations, improving the dairy industry and developing new meat products or any other activity. The big question is how do we measure the overall impact of the PVO and its volunteers and staff on any particular

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIA'S CREDIT COOPERATIVE SYSTEM

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program in Russia continues to make a valuable and significant contribution to the development of Russia's Rural Credit Cooperatives (RCC). Russia's small and medium size private farmers have largely been denied access to financing for the past decade. A movement to organize RCCs for the purpose of lending to private farmers and small businesses has been underway in Russia since 1997. ACIDI/VOCA (AV) has supported this movement by addressing the important organizational, technical, and institutional development issues during the past five years. Currently more than 240 of these new member owned and controlled organizations are providing credit. About 95% of the loans made to the members are for production agriculture. The on-going lending program is administered through the Rural Credit Cooperation Development Foundation (RCCDF) located in Moscow.

AV works in partnership with the RCCDF in implementing the Russian-American Lending Program. USAID awarded a grant known as Managing Agricultural Credit (MAC) to AV totaling about \$1.8 million over the past four years. This grant program has provided AV the means to develop: sound credit practices and policies. The Russian FtF Program has bolstered the USAID MAC Program and to substantially leverage development results. Thirty-eight volunteer specialists from the US were recruited under the FtF Program to complete a variety of assignments to strengthen the rural finance initiative.

The RCC host assignments were often focused on best practices such as cash flow analysis and management consulting. The FtF RCCDF assignments indicate a progressive increase in complexity during the four-year period from basic policy and procedure development to assessment of loan portfolio risk and modern methods of monitoring financial institutions.

Through the MAC Program, hundreds of accountants and credit officers from the RCCs were trained in best business practices. Workshops teach many participants the principles of credit administration; and these individuals leverage this knowledge to teach farmer/borrowers how to prepare business plans and apply for a loan. For example, one seminar of 40 participants could easily result in 250-400 good loans.

The RAL has loaned more than \$10.5 million to more than 3,000 farmers and rural businesses. During the past three years the RCCDF has retained more than \$1 million from operations after taxes. Delinquency is averaging about 1% of loan volume.

country. Right now the implementers have not attempted to combine impacts from many activities. Each implementer has developed a system for measurement. For example CNFA has a system they call “the Integrated Project Design and Evaluation System” which measures the extent of lives improved through its projects. They include large and small and indirect and direct improvement and provide a narrative defining these terms. Seeking to quantify the overall impact of its FtF program, CNFA is now updating empirical data on each of its host’s performance on an annual basis and using it to develop verifiable indications of the number of people whose lives have been improved in a tangible way. By doing so, CNFA is now beginning to quantify the overall impact of its FtF projects, denominated in “lives improved.” This could provide an indication of the success of aggregated activities on a sector basis but does not yet provide a proven system to measure economic growth.

Recommendations for RFA:

1. All implementers should have a significant portion of their volunteer days in one sector in each country.
2. Each PVO implementer should look for activities within sectors. The sectors in which the implementer is working should be established with the Missions to be sure that they are supportive or complementary to Mission SOs.

3.4 M E and I Systems

Monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment (ME&I) feature in the activities of all the PVOs implementing the FtF Program. Overall, the documentation provided by PVOs contains greater detail than that associated with virtually all the other volunteer and consultancy type assignments that the author is familiar with. The costs of the system are significant, although a detailed analysis of these costs is not currently available.

Purposes and Utilization of ME&I: The major purposes of ME&I systems are two fold. First, to account to USAID and second, to serve as a management tool for the PVOs themselves. In both instances it is important to consider the demand side, namely how the information is used.

With respect to accountability, the information being collected by the PVOs appears to be more than adequate. Given current staffing levels in EGAT, it is difficult for USAID/Washington to process the information it currently receives. There is more that USAID might do to monitor FtF if and when the staffing situation improves.

The PVOs make extensive use of the information for reporting purposes and management, notably in discussions with host organizations on progress and the programming of future volunteer assignments. The documentation also serves to inform successive volunteers about a host organization and provides background to their specific assignment, including the trip reports of previous volunteers.

Less use is made of the documentation in decisions to start, suspend or terminate projects. These decisions are central to the allocation of FtF resources and ideally the ME&I systems should give

special attention to serving the needs of management in these areas. Why is this not the case? First, documentation normally starts after a decision has been made to go ahead with a project. Second, decisions to suspend or terminate a project often relate to extenuating circumstances, rather than the performance of the specific host organization that is the focus of the ME&I documentation. In general, ME&I systems of the type that the PVOs have developed is more suited to serving the needs of a program that is impact oriented than one that is more people to people in character. To the extent that decisions on projects, host organizations and volunteer assignments are based on opportunism rather than aggregated sector activities, the information from existing ME&I systems may be less useful.

The Basic Approach: The implementers have placed a high priority on the ME&I systems. They have dedicated substantial (human and other) resources to the development of the system, to the continuous input of fresh data, and to the use of the data to satisfy a myriad of inquiries regarding FtF Program performance from a wide perspective stretching from number of volunteer assignments to criteria relating to host sustainability. In the case of ACIDI/VOCA approximately 15% of local staff time is devoted to the maintenance of the M E & I System.

There are variations in the ME&I systems among the PVOs, but all incorporate the same basic elements. Baseline data is collected at the start of each project using the host profile and updated annually. Empirical data is collected from verifiable sources at either the primary or secondary level using proxy indicators in the profile. Anticipated impacts are analyzed and reported upon at the end of each year. The basic approach makes sense and serves the formal reporting requirements of USAID Washington. The approach is also adequate for purposes of updating project strategies and preparing SOWs for volunteers.

Some streamlining seems possible, such as:

- Combining the project strategies and the host profiles where a project involves a single host organization;
- Increasingly feature sectors on the assumption that clustering volunteer assignments on specific issues or sub sectors will significantly increase the potential for impact;
- Assignments that are more exploratory in nature and generally outside of sector areas need not necessarily be the focus of additional analysis. Exploratory volunteer assignments are likely to be more subjective. In this case activities might be designed to generate some of the information necessary to determine whether or not there is a potential priority theme that might be developed in the specific area or sub sector;
- The selection of sectors guided in large part by the Strategic Objectives (SOs) of the country Mission or regional office of USAID in which case USAID may already have the necessary sub sector studies;
- The PVOs implementing FtF may carry out such studies. PVOs implementing FtF in a particular country or region are often implementing other projects that may include responsibility for performing at least some of the required analysis in the sector and/or sub sector levels to meet the needs of FtF;
- As more emphasis is placed on impact, it is expected that ME&I analysis will feature more prominently in decisions to terminate/change directions for a project as well as in the

decision to start in the first place. The existing data set is felt to be generally adequate at the project and host organization levels for this purpose. The annual updates of the project strategies and host profiles are the obvious points for decisions on termination and changes in direction;

- All implementers plan post-assignment impact monitoring surveys 6-12 months after volunteer assignments are complete. This has been deemed sufficient time for some measurable impact in most cases. However many activities visited by the evaluation team either (1) need a much longer time period to show impact or (2) show impact in the later stages. It is important for implementers to capture impact beyond the initial impact period.

As FtF moves toward providing clusters of volunteers to specific priority themes/sub-sectors, the FtF project strategy might become a component of a sub sector analysis focusing on the roles and numbers of volunteers to be supplied to the sub sector. The entire sub sector analysis as well as the FtF project strategy might be reviewed annually. The project strategy would not usually be host organization specific as several organizations might be involved as beneficiaries of training and advisory assistance provided directly and indirectly by volunteers. In such instances, it may not be necessary or very feasible to collect detailed information on individual beneficiary organizations, but rather to use some form of sampling.

The time frame and level of effort available for the evaluation did not make it possible to make a detailed assessment of the accuracy of specific data sets. The PVO field staff in the host countries and regions visited were making serious efforts to collect and report data as accurately as possible, but some of the data are clearly estimates, notably the numbers of beneficiaries and the magnitude of the benefits. PVO staff collecting and analyzing this information do not in general have special expertise in this area, but appear to be doing at least an adequate job in the countries visited by team members. It would be possible to collect more accurate information, particularly for the project impact assessments, but, as suggested above, the utility or cost effectiveness of greater accuracy in this area is questionable.

At least some of the PVOs have attempted to share ME&I responsibilities with host and partner organizations with very mixed results. This is understandable where there are no clear incentives for such participation. In the case of strategic partnerships with one or more organizations in a priority theme area involving several volunteers, assistance with the documentation should feature in the up front negotiations on collaboration and formalized in a written agreement. Some flexibility in the reporting formats should enable the parties to come to a workable understanding. Volunteers are a valuable asset and need not be given away free. A potential partner that has no interest in contributing to the cost of the volunteers in various ways including assistance with the documentation is not a very promising partner. The PVOs have options in terms of allocating volunteer slots and as partner organizations grow to appreciate this fact, the more they are likely to compete with one another in offering assistance in various forms.

In the past, USAID has hosted a full day forum for FtF Implementers to share best practices, discuss program results, and compare management styles. The last such forum was held in February 2000,

nearly three years ago. The result of this meeting was the establishment of common indicators, which started the process of improving monitoring systems for all implementers.

It is time for a PVO conference on ME & I. Collaboration between the PVOs could produce more consistency in approach; especially given the staff time devoted to the ME&I systems and the importance that the data is to the various stakeholders. PVOs could present rationale of approach to each other in a forum sponsored by USAID. The goal would be to streamline the reporting approach, discuss the aggregation of sector data, determine how to interface with USAID Missions, and explore ex post use. Hopefully, this approach would produce some cost savings as well. This effort should be voluntary and without bars to ideas for improving the sometimes burdensome collection and reporting of data.

4. Peace Corps

The Peace Corps and USAID signed an agreement on April 4, 1997 to provide funding, initially \$180,000, for the services and expertise of the PC in the FtF Program through a "Participating Agency Service Agreement" (PASA). The goal of the program was to facilitate the transfer of technical expertise from experienced U.S. agriculturists and resource management professional to host country farmers and organizations supported by Peace Corps Volunteers (PCV) who are involved in agriculture and natural resources activities. It was thought that the participation by the Peace Corps in the FtF Program would lead to an increase in the level of agricultural expertise available to the Peace Corps country programs. The program was to field 33 FtF volunteers. Peace Corp assigned a staff member to implement the program. Peace Corps set up a recruiting database, determined volunteer needs at the field level, and provided support during the time the FtF volunteer was in country and, handled all logistics and began measuring impact. PC also provided each FtF volunteer with some money to implement his or her training program. Peace Corps fielded 19 FtF volunteers to Africa and Latin America; many of these volunteers enjoyed a good deal of success. However, Peace Corps staff found they were spending a great deal of time on the labor intensive, nuts and bolts of the Farmer-to-Farmer Program and very little on FtF promotion or impact measurement.

In 1998 after PC looked at several alternatives, they decided to relinquish its management role in FtF to the implementers who already have the recruiting, travel, placement and implementation systems in place. For some reason, PC and USAID and the implementing partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding on May 30, 2000 to work collaboratively in carrying out the Farmer-to-Farmer Program for an additional two years and four months. The plan was to field up 56 FtF volunteers during this period. The program was to end on September 20, 2001, a little over one year after it started. Unfortunately not one volunteer was fielded under this MOU. Less than half of the money allocated to this program was utilized.

Another approach to working with Peace Corps is to involve FtF and Peace Corps Volunteers jointly on projects. Peace Corps workers are often looking for a good project to identify with and if country staff looks at where Peace Corps Volunteers are stationed, they might be able to involve them with an FtF project. One volunteer related his experience working with a Peace Corps Volunteer on an agricultural production and utilization program. The FtF volunteer was working with soybean production and processing and the Peace Corps Volunteer opted into the project and continued to follow through, even to the extent of getting some funding, after the FtF volunteer expert had left the country. The two volunteers communicated by e-mail in order to facilitate the project. In Latin America PCVs frequently act as translators for FtF volunteers who are working with beneficiary organizations.

Zambia: CNFA continued to contribute volunteers to strengthen Peace Corps' Rural Aquaculture Project promoting fish farming as a source of nutrition and income for smallholder farmers across the northern provinces of Zambia. CNFA's volunteers provide training to the Peace Corps volunteers as well as to farmers. The PCVs in turn relay the training to larger populations of farmers and assist them in implementing the recommendations of the CNFA volunteers.

During the evaluation one Peace Corps Director suggested that FtF volunteers perform pre-assignments training for Peace Corps volunteers in order to increase the potential impact. While this can be explored through in-country staff consultations, this goes beyond the scope of FtF and would ultimately detract from the people-to-people nature of the technical assistance by removing the volunteer from direct contact with host country beneficiaries. FtF volunteers may be able to play a minor role in training by leading one or two day seminars as part of their SOW.

Summary: Peace Corps partnership works best at the field level. Formal collaboration with Peace Corps at U.S. HQ level was a bust. However, there are many examples of successful informal partnering in the field, working through the local office. This would seem to be the favorable modus operandi for FtF and Pace Corps. This may also be improved upon by signing MOUs in the field creating a more formal relationship at the local level. This would ensure periodic performance review on the part of Pace Corps, as well as, creating a systematic approach that would not rely so heavily on staff personalities.

Conclusions: Peace Corps should not receive any further grants. The FtF Program is very difficult to implement and PC obviously did not have the human resources to implement it. However we have seen that the program continued through the PVO implementers. They continued to recruit FtF volunteers to work with PCVs and other partners in the field when requested by the PCV and the Country Director. They recruited the FtF volunteer through their normal channels and procedures working with the FtF structure. The PCV has worked closely with the in country FtF office and developed the SOW. The PCV also participated in the host profile and follow up surveys. The team believes that this type of collaboration should continue and be encouraged. We believe that the full amount of the grant would go to the applicant partnering with PC and winning the right to work in the same sub region as Peace Corps. Peace Corps Volunteers or staff would make a request to the implementer in the region by providing the implementer with a scope of work. The applicant would

determine if the request fits into its plan of action and sector plan. If so, it would recruit the FtF volunteer to work in the PC Volunteer's village or region.

5. FtF Management

Background

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program will support EGAT'S primary function of reducing poverty and hunger and promoting peace and prosperity in developing and transition countries. EGAT is designed to strengthen the capability of USAID Field Missions to work collaboratively with governments, entrepreneurs, investors, traders, scientists, farmers, and community groups. The Farmer-to-Farmer Program, authorized by the U.S. Congress as a direct person-to-person program, will fully support these objectives.

The EGAT Bureau encompasses a wide breadth of technical specialties such as information and communication technology, rural finance, production technology, agribusiness, natural resource management, community capacity building, program assessment, democracy and governance, trade related technical assistance, poverty reduction strategies, energy and water issues, ecotourism, human capacity development and others. Potentially there is a lot of synergy with EGAT programs focusing on these activities. Programs such as the CRSPS, private sector support projects (buy-ins such as RAISE), BIFAD programs and HBCU's IT projects could all play a potential roll. The challenge for EGAT and its staff is how to capture that synergy. The challenge for the Office of Agriculture is to find a way to get into the program by capitalizing on its large network of host country implementers and U.S. volunteers. Congress has limited the implementation of the program to "U.S. PVOs, nonprofit farm organization, U.S. agriculture cooperatives, private U.S. agribusiness or a college and university (including historically black colleges and universities, land grant colleges or universities and foundations maintained by colleges and universities)". Programs will have to be specific and well thought out so they will not impede the implementation of the already successful program.

5.1 USAID/W

Current shortage of staff. It is very difficult for any one person to manage a program the size of the FtF activity. There are a certain tasks required to keep the day-to-day program operational. These include:

- Doing monthly travel notifications for all planned volunteer assignments;
- Making sure the budget is received, completing documentation for incremental funding, estimating accruals;
- Responding to day to day requests for info;
- Aggregating data on input, output and indicator tables;

- Responding to requests for modifications or key approval issues (approving field staff, geographic changes) approving and required by the cooperative agreements; and
- Receiving and acknowledging reports and work plans.

Additional staff would allow:

- Analytical work required for decision making, visits to the field for monitoring impact, fostering of more buy-ins and collaborative arrangements;
- Thorough review of reports and more detailed written responses, better tracking of indicators;
- Liaison with the hill, other bureaus and field missions;
- Improved information output e.g. the web; and
- Interaction with other EGAT programs to foster collaboration with exiting projects.

Overshadowing these ideas of what is good management is the fact that these are cooperative Agreements (CAs). There are mixed signals on how much USAID management should be involved in the program. Maybe USAID management philosophy is essentially to sign the grant and let the partners do their thing. This discussion will never end, the truth is in the middle and a good CTO has to find creative ways to influence what the partners do. The answer may lay in the importance of taking this activity to a point where it will have a measurable impact on its clients and it has been moving in that direction. If the idea is to focus on "sector impact" to facilitate a higher level of accountability as a measurable instrument of economic development, greater Mission involvement, increased support to Minority Serving Institutions, then there is certainly a greater need for additional staff to assist in promoting these objectives.

Technical oversight requires the ability and experience to determine the relevance of partner proposals and work plans to achieve impact in a host country's agricultural sector. This involves providing input and guidance on the analytical process that is used by the partners to arrive at the choices they make with respect to areas of focus and the potential efficiency and effectiveness of assignments in achieving broad, equitable and sustainable impact.

Lastly, effective management of the program requires the ability to quickly respond to requests for factual information from Congress, constituents, other USAID operating units and other agencies such as USDA and Department of State. This requires a well-organized and well-maintained database that captures and produces information tailored to specific needs. A few examples are:

- Number of assignments by country and by year
- Value of FtF contribution by country
- Cost of program per volunteer
- Number of volunteers from each state in the U.S.
- Number of host organizations served in each country
- Number of volunteers by gender
- Number of beneficiaries by gender

The next six months will require oversight of the RFA and awards process, annual funding process and ability to respond to day to day issues (Requires a CTO, NMS, and Phoenix skills) as well as drafting input for USAID reporting processes such as the R4, CN, reports on minority organizations and reports to State Department.

5.2 Transfer to EGAT

EGAT is designed to strengthen the capability of USAID Field Missions to work collaboratively with governments, entrepreneurs, investors, traders, scientists' farmers, parents and community groups. EGAT seeks to make the best possible technical information available to those who need it by drawing on the strengths of the academic, the practitioner, and communities. FtF utilizes the services of U.S. farmers and specialists from the U.S. agricultural sector on a voluntary basis to work with agricultural enterprises, rural finance institutions and farm organizations around the world.

EGAT's program supports three priority areas:

- Promoting open and competitive economies;
- Developing science and technology to improve agricultural productivity, natural resource management markets, and human nutrition; and
- Expanding access to economic opportunities for the poor.

The EGAT Bureau encompasses a wide breadth of technical specialties such as bit-technology, information and communication technology, rural finance, production technology, agribusiness, natural resource management, community capacity building, program assessment, democracy and governance, trade related technical assistance, poverty reduction strategies, energy and water issues, ecotourism, human capacity development and others.

Agriculture Business:

Based on an in-country survey of hosts, the PVO implementers learned quickly that the greatest need and also the greatest returns were from enhancing agribusinesses. Agribusiness, processing, market and lending associations play a key role in the developing economies. Examples include: business women's associations receiving credit union training, associations capable of providing consulting services and training to farm cooperatives, the development of regional commodity information systems, the development of branded value-added products, meat marketing cooperatives that have developed improved products such as packaging, and new products, etc.

The EGAT's Office of Agribusiness and markets can provide fresh ideas that build on previous FtF Programs to improve local host organizational performance, to strengthen the capacity of people oriented organizations, and to influence change within their communities, regions and countries.

Conclusion: Farmer-to-Farmer staff should be placed in the Office of Agribusiness and Markets.

5.3 Areas Served and Countries Selected

Organize the implementing countries into blocks. Except for Russia and the NIS, the FtF Program has grown in a seemingly uncontrolled manner. There are many countries with as few as two, three, and four volunteers all over Africa and Latin America. We believe that at the end of FY 2003 it will be an ideal time to rearrange the countries into focus groups based on the following criteria:

- Mission Strategic Objectives
- Level of USAID funding in the agriculture sector
- FtF experience in the region
- Country security and stability

ANNEXES

6.1 Evaluation Scope and Methodology

6.2 Tables

6.3 FtF Legislation

6.4 Contractors' Reports: Executive Summaries

- Rodney J. Fink: Caucasus Consortium—ACDI/VOCA, Land O' Lakes, and Winrock International
- Elon Gilbert: Nigeria, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe—ACDI/VOCA, CNFA, Winrock and Land O'Lakes
- Eric Benschoter: Haiti and Jamaica—Partners of the Americas and Land O'Lakes
- Bill Matlby: Russia, Ukraine and Moldova—ACDI/VOCA and CNFA
- Ira "Buck" Richards: Mexico, Nicaragua and Bolivia—Land O'Lakes, Partners of the Americas and ACDI/VOCA

6. ANNEXES

6.1 EVALUATION SCOPE

Tasks

Below are the key areas that need to be addressed before drafting a new RFA:

1. The Capacity Of FtF Implementing Partners To Achieve, Measure And Document Socio-Economic Impact on Specific Sectors.

The evaluation should first document the extent to which FtF is meeting the purposes intended by the legislation: to increase food availability and distribution, improve farming and marketing operations and assist the transition to a free-market economy. The evaluation will assess and document grantees' approaches to identifying sectors/areas for concentrating FtF assignments, and the systems developed to track and measure sector and institutional impact. This should be examined from both the aspect of host organizations' improved ability to generate demonstrable increases in value added and/or services on improved sustainable capacity of host organizations. Questions to be addressed include:

- ☐ Have implementing organizations created an analytical framework to identify the commodity chains or service sectors that offer the best opportunities for generating increased economic growth in the agricultural sector?
- ☐ Have they examined commodity chains to identify the key bottlenecks to improved performance such as inputs, credit, production technology, processing, market development, transport and policy?
- ☐ Have implementing organizations developed a strategic approach to local partnering?
- ☐ Have volunteer assignments been developed around opportunities presented by other private or public programs?
- ☐ What success can the FtF program claim in building sustainable agricultural systems, including farmers organizations, marketing mechanisms, value-added processing, alternative sources of credit, and access to information issues such as land tenure?
- ☐ Has work with host country organizations and institutions resulted in enhanced sustainability of these organizations? If so, is the success replicable and by what means? Do partners have a systematic approach to understanding issues related to sustainability in terms of improvements in areas such as strategic planning, governance and financial management?

2. Development of Capacity of Host Country Institutions to Implement FtF Program.

- ☐ Can implementation of the program be made more cost efficient by increasing reliance on host country organizations and/or local staff? What are the risks and opportunities related to relying more on in-country organizations to develop SOW for volunteer assignments and provide logistical support to volunteers in country?

3. Development of PVO Capacity in the U.S.

- ☐ The current generation of awards includes a sub-grant program for increasing the capacity of smaller/minority-based organizations to implement the FtF program. Assess the effectiveness of this mechanism for implementing the program and the effectiveness for developing capacity of other PVO's to compete as prime grantees for awards to implement FtF.
- ☐ Are there other mechanisms that could be used to foster competition among a wider range of PVO's?

4. Assess the Impact of FtF on U.S. Public Awareness of Foreign Assistance and U.S. Businesses.

- ☐ Provide an indicative assessment of the impact of public outreach by the FtF volunteers and the implementing organizations to inform the public about FtF's contributions to U.S. international assistance efforts. Grantees collect input data on volunteer outreach activities. These can be pooled and augmented with some anecdotes and critical analysis.
- ☐ Provide an indicative assessment of the impact of the FtF program on a sample of U.S. agricultural organizations and private businesses. This may be measured, for example, by the number of business partnerships created due to a volunteer activity.

5. Coordination and Liaison With Missions and Operating Units.

- ☐ Assess the extent to which other USAID operating units are aware of the FtF Program and to what extent planning and implementation of the Program could be more effectively coordinated with USAID strategies and activities.

6. Assess the Choice of Countries Targeted for FtF Programs.

This would include:

- ☐ Reviewing the rationale for the countries chosen, both at the USAID and the grantee level, and the level of emphasis given to each country;

- ☐ Reviewing the extent to which the countries and sectors chosen represent the priorities for USAID at the Agency level and for the various operating units involved in the countries that are being served by FtF; and
- ☐ Reviewing the implementers' geographic strategies to determine if they are effectively focused on a regional or country deployment of volunteers.

7. Assess the Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Implementing Partners' Mechanisms for Recruitment, Placement and Support of Volunteers.

- ☐ Costs per day and per volunteer assignment vary widely from organization to organization. What are the factors that affect these costs and what measures can be taken to make the program more cost efficient?

8. Assess the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Implementing Monitoring and Evaluation Systems.

- ☐ Each of the implementing partners, in collaboration with USAID and other partners, has devised and implemented monitoring and evaluation systems. Assess the effectiveness of these systems in providing information on impact and informing management decisions on Program design and implementation.

9. Assess Issues Related to USAID Management of the FtF Program.

- ☐ Do the two PVC positions authorized by the program legislation provide an appropriate level of program management? The evaluation should assess this structure, via interviews within USAID and with implementing partners.
- ☐ Examine the number and scope of grants that are being managed by FtF program and make recommendations on the number of grants and the geographic organization of the program.
- ☐ Assess the effectiveness of the PASA with Peace Corps

10. Develop Recommendations for a Scope of Work for an RFA for Farmer-to-Farmer Program.

- ☐ Based on the conclusions drawn from the evaluation, develop draft recommendations for the next five-year phase of the program.
- ☐ Based on the recommendations from the evaluation, assist in the drafting and design of the RFA.

6.2 METHODOLOGY

The FtF impact evaluation will be carried out on the basis of (but not limited to the following):

- 1) A review of proposals, grants, work plans, action memoranda, mid-term evaluations, evaluations commissioned by the grantees, grantees' semi-annual and annual reports and host organization comments.
- 2) Interviews with FtF clients, grantee staff in the U.S. and the field, FtF volunteers (returned and in-country), BHR/PVC/FtF and EGAT staff, U.S. organizations that sponsor volunteers, State and USDA officials, USAID Bureau staff, Embassy and USAID field staff.
- 3) Site visits to a representative number of FtF projects in the following countries:
 - Latin America
 - Mexico: Land O'Lakes (partnership with IITC)
 - Bolivia: Partners and ACIDI/VOCA
 - Nicaragua: Partners of the Americas
 - Africa
 - Ghana: Winrock
 - Nigeria: Winrock
 - Ethiopia: ACIDI/VOCA
 - Newly Independent States and Russia
 - Russia: ACIDI/VOCA
 - Ukraine: Citizens Network
 - Armenia: ACIDI/VOCA
 - Uzbekistan: Winrock
 - Caribbean Region
 - Jamaica: LOL
 - Haiti: Partners of the Americas

Farmer-to-Farmer Program activities are widely dispersed throughout geographic regions mentioned above. For security reasons and due to the difficulty of travel in some of these areas, it is not considered feasible to have the evaluation team visit all areas to which FtF volunteers have been assigned.

The countries proposed above are selected either as major recipients of volunteer services or because the FtF program in that country presents an innovative approach to implementation, which may provide the basis for implementation models elsewhere.

6.2 Tables

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Evaluation

Country Program Tables

ACDI/VOCA

Country	Core/ Non-Core	Number of Hosts	Number of FTF Volunteers	Number of Volunteer Trips	Value of Volunteer Time	Number of Volunteer Assignments	Number of Beneficiaries	Training	Resources Leverage by FTF Volunteer	Resources leveraged by Host	Resources Mobilized
Africa		42	81	94	\$1,359,970	100	8,794	3,496	\$24,201	\$82,329	\$62,010
Ethiopia	C	14	40	53	\$685,051	54	1,667	920	\$15,826	\$47,140	n/a
Kenya	C	5	8	8	\$123,415	8	241	46	\$1,350	\$3,328	\$0
Tanzania	C	2	3	3	\$45,253	3	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Uganda	C	21	30	30	\$506,251	35	6,886	2,530	\$7,025	\$31,861	\$62,010
Asia/Near East		22	29	35	\$434,556	39	1,748	1,256	\$12,575	\$4,956	\$0
Cambodia	N	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mongolia	C	22	29	33	\$434,556	37	1,748	1,256	\$12,575	\$4,956	n/a
Latin America		55	81	107	\$1,432,840	111	4,900	3,265	\$6,243	\$158,316	\$0
Bolivia	C	55	81	107	\$1,432,840	111	4,900	3,265	\$6,243	\$158,316	n/a
Europe & Eurasia		1,440	885	1,141	\$13,245,305	1,349	112,533	13,310	\$75,183	\$2,918,905	\$51,625,704
AgriBusiness (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine)		746	288	363	\$6,951,787	545	84,767	n/a	n/a	\$1,183,200	\$3,342,025
AgriFinance (Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia)		179	138	181	\$1,764,226	184	4,610	6,189	n/a	\$1,449,598	\$41,064,021
Armenia	C	42	99	56	\$414,342	58	1,446	394	\$5,578	\$13,916	\$386,350
Azerbaijan	C	68	109	75.5	\$512,722	80	2,811	917	\$15,086	\$11,338	\$295,700
Belarus	C		45								
Georgia	C	47	62	68.5	\$421,234	73	1,273	202	\$5,320	\$21,709	\$27,654
Kazakhstan	C		57								
Kyrgyzstan	C										
Moldova	C		48								
Russia	C	358	414	397	\$3,180,994	409	17,626	5,608	\$49,199	\$239,144	\$6,509,954
Ukraine	C		51								
PROGRAM TOTAL	15C 1N	1,559	1,076	1,377	\$16,472,671	1,599	127,975	21,327	\$118,202	\$3,164,506	\$51,687,714

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Evaluation

Country Program Tables

CNFA

Country	Core/ Non-Core	Number of Hosts	Number of FTF Volunteers	Number of Volunteer Trips	Value of Volunteer Time	Number of Volunteer Assignments	Number of Beneficiaries	Training	Resources Leverage by FTF Volunteer	Resources leveraged by Host	Resources Mobilized
Africa		52	98	137	\$745,368	139	5,851	4,780	\$27,294	\$13,714	\$0
Mozambique	C	9	14	23	\$90,891	23	397	313	\$3,840	\$345	\$0
South Africa	C	4	7	11	\$12,043	12	261	278	\$50	\$0	\$0
Zambia	C	5	10	12	\$63,887	12	847	827	\$484	n/a	\$0
Zimbabwe	C	34	67	91	\$578,547	92	4,346	3,362	\$22,920	\$13,369	\$0
NIS-West NIS		125	167	232	\$1,002,940	234	15,078	12,921	\$17,336	\$8,268	\$0
Belarus	C	11	15	23	\$87,241	24	473	378	\$610	\$1,520	\$0
Moldova	C	48	58	87	\$395,620	87	3,376	2,758	\$8,322	\$2,691	\$0
Ukraine	C	66	94	122	\$520,079	123	11,229	9,785	\$8,404	\$4,057	\$0
PROGRAM TOTAL	7C / 0N	177	265	369	\$1,748,308	373	20,929	17,701	\$44,630	\$21,982	\$0

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Evaluation

Country Program Tables

Land O'Lakes

Country	Core/ Non-Core	Number of Hosts	Number of FTF Volunteers	Number of Volunteer Trips	Value of Volunteer Time	Number of Volunteer Assignments	Number of Primary Beneficiaries	Training	Resources Leveraged by FTF Volunteer	Resources leveraged by Host	Resources Mobilized
Africa		3	24	30	\$198,340	30	3,927	3,904	\$6,287	\$8,528	\$4,885
Guinea	N	1	1	1	\$3,500	1	50	n/a	\$250	n/a	n/a
Malawi	C	2	3	3	\$19,790	3	82	242	\$475	n/a	n/a
Kenya	N	n/a	1	2	\$7,050	2	1,256	899	n/a	\$3,184	n/a
South Africa	N	n/a	10	12	\$48,000	12	1,320	1,010	\$1,143	\$2,655	n/a
Tanzania	N	n/a	3	3	\$12,000	3	100	920	\$719	\$50	n/a
Uganda	N	n/a	n/a	3	\$12,000	3	850	730	n/a	n/a	n/a
Zambia	N	n/a	6	6	\$96,000	6	269	103	\$3,700	\$2,639	\$4,885
Asia/Near East		48	45	65	\$246,634	65	2,078	1,727	\$2,173	\$5,601	\$0
Egypt	N	n/a	1	1	\$3,500	1	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
India	N	n/a	2	2	\$7,000	2	100	50	n/a	n/a	n/a
Philippines	C	36	30	49	\$183,884	49	1,698	1,527	\$2,173	\$5,601	n/a
West Bank	C	12	12	13	\$52,250	13	270	150	n/a	n/a	n/a
Caribbean Basin		56	70	84	\$318,527	84	2,120	1,523	\$7,814	\$38,435	\$1,397
Jamaica	C	56	70	84	\$318,527	84	2,120	1,523	\$7,814	\$38,435	\$1,397
Latin America		45	38	64	\$272,004	64	1,858	603	\$3,792	\$7,796	\$220
Guatemala	N	n/a	2	2	\$7,000	2	60	40	n/a	n/a	n/a
Honduras	N	n/a	8	10	\$27,960	10	494	180	\$1,400	\$2,604	n/a
Mexico	C	45	28	51	\$233,044	51	1,240	363	\$2,392	\$4,352	\$220
Nicaragua	N	n/a	n/a	1	\$4,000	1	64	20	n/a	\$840	n/a
PROGRAM TOTAL	5C 11N	165	177	243	\$1,035,505	243	9,983	7,757	\$20,066	\$60,360	\$6,502

Country Program Tables

Partners of the Americas

Country	Core/ Non-Core	Number of Hosts	Number of FTF Volunteers	Number of Volunteer Trips	Value of Volunteer Time	Number of Volunteer Assignments	Number of Beneficiaries	Training	Resources Leverage by FTF Volunteer	Resources leveraged by Host	Resources Mobilized
Caribbean Basin		17	28	37	\$108,558	37	1,773	1,773	\$50,750	\$134,594	\$
Dominican Rep.	N	1	2	2	\$5,868	2	84	84	\$2,900	\$7,691	\$
Haiti	C	16	26	35	\$102,690	35	1,689	1,689	\$47,850	\$126,903	\$7,73
Latin America		232	286	373	\$1,094,382	373	18,744	18,744	\$540,850	\$1,434,387	\$464,42
Argentina	N	3	5	6	\$17,604	6	322	322	\$8,700	\$23,073	\$9,20
Bolivia	C	58	62	78	\$228,852	78	4,065	4,065	\$113,100	\$299,950	\$20,10
Brazil	N	14	14	15	\$44,010	15	774	774	\$21,750	\$57,684	\$7,62
Ecuador	C	25	36	45	\$132,030	45	2,069	2,069	\$65,250	\$173,049	\$7,05
El Salvador	C	15	24	40	\$117,360	40	2,116	2,116	\$58,000	\$153,821	\$33,49
Guatemala	C	15	26	27	\$79,218	27	1,423	1,423	\$39,150	\$103,830	\$2,37
Guyana	C	12	13	32	\$93,888	32	1,666	1,666	\$46,400	\$123,057	\$30,30
Honduras	C	31	36	46	\$134,964	46	2,218	2,218	\$66,700	\$176,896	\$34,24
Mexico	N	1	1	1	\$2,934	1	37	37	\$1,450	\$3,846	\$
Nicaragua	C	38	51	64	\$187,776	64	3,102	3,102	\$92,800	\$246,114	\$314,80
Panama	N	1	1	1	\$2,934	1	37	37	\$1,450	\$3,846	\$
Paraguay	N	7	3	3	\$8,802	3	180	180	\$4,350	\$11,537	\$4,40
Uruguay	N	12	14	15	\$44,010	15	735	735	\$21,750	\$57,684	\$85
PROGRAM TOTAL	8C / 7N	249	314	410	\$1,202,940	410	20,517	20,517	\$591,600	\$1,568,981	\$464,42

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Evaluation

Country Program Tables

Winrock

Country	Core/ Non-Core	Number of Hosts	Number of FTF Volunteers	Number of Volunteer Trips	Value of Volunteer Time	Number of Volunteer Assignments	Number of Beneficiaries	Training	Resources Leverage by FTF Volunteer	Resources leveraged by Host	Resources Mobilized
Africa		24	96	104	\$699,623	134	10,179	2,817	\$7,165	\$88,806	\$14,291
Burkina Faso	N					8					
Gabon, Buinea, Morocco, Senegal	N	6	6	7	\$43,437	7	1,074	61	n/a	\$25,782	n/a
Ghana	C	12	20	22	\$188,186	25	2,717	1,368	\$5,690	\$20,960	\$14,291
Nigeria	C	6	70	75	\$468,000	94	6,388	1,388	\$1,475	\$42,064	n/a
Asia/Near East		128	156	210	\$1,117,260	250	18,103	4,276	\$15,393	\$63,042	\$3,175,926
Bangladesh	C	28	36	49	\$323,511	67	3,826	1,920	\$6,975	\$21,826	\$2,580,000
India	C	54	63	83	\$392,889	90	8,611	1,719	\$4,891	\$28,385	\$431,303
Nepal	C	46	57	78	\$400,860	93	5,666	637	\$3,527	\$12,831	\$164,623
NIS-CARs		85	218	342	\$2,145,943	368	32,450	5,669	\$80,969	\$81,493	\$662,321
Kazakhstan	C	27	53	84	\$461,143	89	3,798	1,051	\$26,745	\$25,367	\$161,820
Kyrgyzstan	C	16	51	76	\$486,857	82	4,326	394	\$760	\$21,310	\$107,500
Tajikistan	C	11	21	31	\$236,914	38	4,747	289	\$200	\$1,720	\$335,001
Turkmenistan	C	16	47	73	\$485,829	76	3,896	1,929	\$10,114	\$7,502	\$25,800
Uzbekistan	C	15	46	78	\$475,200	83	15,683	2,006	\$43,150	\$25,594	\$32,200
PROGRAM TOTAL	10C, 2N	237	470	656	\$3,962,826	752	60,732	12,762	\$103,527	\$233,341	\$3,852,538

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Evaluation

Country Program Tables

REGIONAL

TOTALS

Country	Number of Hosts	Number of FTF Volunteers	Number of Volunteer Trips	Value of Volunteer Time	Number of Volunteer Assignments	Number of Beneficiaries	Training	Resources Leverage by FTF Volunteer	Resources leveraged by Host	Resources Mobilized
Africa	121	299	365	\$3,003,301	403	28,751	14,997	\$64,997	\$193,377	\$81,186
Asia/Near East	140	299	449	\$3,578,783	479	37,350	8,934	\$87,212	\$239,809	\$662,321
Caribbean Basin	79	98	121	\$427,085	121	3,893	3,296	\$58,564	\$173,029	\$1,397
Latin America	326	405	544	\$2,799,226	548	25,502	22,612	\$550,885	\$1,600,499	\$38,400
Europe & Eurasia	1,650	1,270	1,715	\$16,394,188	1,951	160,061	31,900	\$173,488	\$3,008,666	\$52,288,025
PROGRAM TOTAL	2,316	2,371	3,194	\$26,202,583	3,502	255,557	81,739	\$935,146	\$5,215,380	\$53,071,329

SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS BY COUNTRY--WORLD WIDE

Implementing Agency Countries	Country LOP Targets	Previous Assignments 10/1/96 to 9/30/01	*Assignments Fielded in FY2002	Total to date 09/30/02	Assignments remaining to be fielded
PARTNERS					
Antigua	3				3
Argentina		6		6	0
Bolivia	106	78	14	92	14
Brazil		15	2	17	0
Cote d'Ivoire	10		0	0	10
Dominican Republic		2		2	0
Ecuador	62	45	5	50	12
El Salvador	56	40	6	46	10
Ghana	10		2	2	9
Grenada	3				3
Guatemala	36	27	1	28	8
Guyana	47	32	5	37	10
Haïti	49	35	5	40	11
Honduras	67	46	10	56	11
Mexico		1		1	
Nicaragua	95	64	15	79	15
Panama		1		1	
Paraguay		3	1	4	
St. Lucia	5		2	2	5
Togo	10		1	1	9
Uruguay		15	1	16	
TOTALS -PARTNERS	559	410	70	480	130
Percent remaining					23%
LAND O' LAKES					
Jamaica/Windward Islands	115	71	14	85	30
Mexico	80	60	9	69	11
Philippines	75	51	0	51	24
South Africa/ Malawi	36	15	13	28	23
West Bank	0	12	0	12	0
Non-Core	26	20	1	21	5
TOTALS-LOL	332	229	37	266	93
Percent remaining					45%

LAND OF LAKES has completed 21 non-core assignments in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, India, and Egypt during the LOP.

Implementing Agency	Country	Previous	*Assignments	Total to date	Assignments
Countries	LOP	Assignments	Fielded in	09/30/02	remaining to be
	Targets	10/1/96 to 9/30/01	FY2002		fielded
ACDI/VOCA					
Bolivia	151	111	20	131	20
Cambodia		2	0	2	0
Ethiopia-A/V	74	58	1	59	20 ('02-'03)
Ethiopia-BARA	32	32	0	32	0
Greater Horn-BARA	12	12	0	12	0
Kenya	28	8*	10	18	10
Mongolia	37	37	0	37	0
Rwanda	6	0	2	2	4
Tanzania	5	3*	0	3	2
Uganda	55	35	11	46	9
TOTALS-ACVO	400	287	44	342	65
Percent Remaining					16.5%
CNFA					
Mozambique	30	16	6	22	8
South Africa	16	-	12	12	4
Zambia	16	8	4	12	4
Zimbabwe	98	83	8	91	7
TOTALS--CNFA	160	107	30	137	23
Percent Remaining					14%
Bangladesh	64	49	19	68	0
India	104	80	20	100	4
Nepal	104	87	11	98	6
Burkina Faso		1	0	1	
Ghana	34	19	6	25	9
Guinea		3	0	3	
Mali			1	1	
Morocco		1	0	1	0
Gabon		1	0	0	0
Nigeria	164	32	80	112	52
Senegal	8		1	1	7
TOTAL- WINROCK	478	273	138	411	78
Percent Remaining					16%

* These ACDI/VOCA assignments were originally considered part of the Uganda program's "targets", per the 1996 Grant. Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania life-of-project targets were not identified prior to the 2001 extension. The eight completed assignments in Kenya and three in Tanzania by 9/30/01 were never stated as targets but were rather included within the Uganda programs "expected" targets prior to 10/1/01.

PARTNERS utilized up to 15% of total travelers in non-target countries, including: Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Panama and Mexico. These efforts serve primarily as essential follow-up to previous Farmer-to-Farmer activities, or as specific interventions where participating organizations have precise needs for which Farmer to Farmer can respond.

SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS BY COUNTRY—NIS

Implementing Agency Country	Country LOP Targets	Previous Assignments 10/1/00 to 9/30/01	*Assignments Fielded in FY2002	Total to date 09/30/02	Assignments remaining to be fielded
ACDI/LOL/WIN					
Armenia	118	62	19	81	37
Georgia	109	53	35	88	21
Azerbaijan	112	50	38	88	24
Totals	339	165	92	257	82
Percent remaining					24%
WINROCK					
Kazakhstan	133	63	32	95	38
Kyrgyz Stan	132	63	31	94	38
Tajikistan	90	28	16	44	46
Turkmenistan	96	46	26	72	24
Uzbekistan	114	58	34	92	22
Totals	565	258	139	397	168
Percent remaining					29%
ACDI/VOCA					
Russia	592	301	143	444	148
Percent remaining					25%
CNFA					
Ukraine	220	75	47	122	98
Moldova	140	48	38	86	54
Belarus	40	10	12	22	18
Totals	400	133	97	230	170
Percent remaining					43%
TOTAL	1869	857	471	1328	568
Percent remaining					30%

REGIONAL TOTALS

Country	No. of Hosts	No. of Volunteers	No. of Volunteer Trips	Value of Volunteer Time	No. of Volunteer Assignments	Number of Beneficiaries	Training
Africa	121	299	365	\$3,003,301	403	28,751	14,997
Asia/Near East	198	230	310	\$1,798,450	354	21,929	7,259
Caribbean Basin	79	98	121	\$427,085	121	3,893	3,296
Latin America	326	405	544	\$2,799,226	548	25,502	22,612
Europe & Eurasia	1,650	1,270	1,715	\$16,394,188	1,951	160,061	31,900
PROGRAM TOTAL	2,374	2,302	3,055	\$24,422,250	3,377	240,136	80,064

Annual Volunteer Outputs

This table does include output from NIS FtF Biasness and Finance I1997-1999)

	ACDI/VOCA	CNFA	Land O'Lakes	Partners	Winrock	Program Total as of 8/30/2002
A. Annual estimated value of resources leveraged by the grantee/volunteers in the U.S. ¹	\$118,202	\$44,630	\$62,551	\$1,191,420	\$103,527	\$1,520,330
B. Annual estimated value of resources leveraged by the host in host country ²	\$3,146,506	\$20,614	\$114,660	\$1,568,943	\$233,350	\$5,084,073
C. Annual estimated value of resources mobilized by Host ³	\$110,277,715	\$0	\$6,502	\$464,425	\$3,852,538	\$114,601,180
D.Total number of direct beneficiaries of FtF volunteer assistance ⁴	127,136	21,515	9,983	19219	60,732	238,585
Male	63,900	15,900	1,574	12,453	37,915	131,742
Female	59,465	5,630	748	6,763	21,449	94,055
E. Number of persons receiving direct formal training (a subset of direct beneficiaries) ⁵	21,327	18,250	7,757	19,219	12,784	79,337
Male	8,371	No data	3,891	12,453	8,899	33,614
Female	6,767	No data	1,687	6,763	3,885	19,102

Annual Volunteer Inputs

July 30, 2001

	ACDI/VOCA	CNFA	Land O'Lakes	Partners	Winrock	Program Total as of 8/30/2002
A. Total LOP number of FtF assignments fielded	1,665	373	243	410	744	3,435
B. Total LOP number of volunteers fielded ¹	1,509	265	177	306	469	2,726
Male	535	210	145	236	618	1,744
Female	106	55	32	71	146	410
C. Number of international FtF volunteer trips	1,457	369	243	410	656	3,135
D. Average cost per volunteer day ³	\$916	\$795	\$732	\$546	\$926	771
E. Estimated value of FtF volunteers' professional time	\$17,230,226	\$1,748,308	\$1,035,505	\$1,202,940	\$3,962,826	\$25,179,805

6.3 FtF Legislation

The legislative objectives of Farmer-to-Farmer assistance:

- (1) Establish and administer a program of farmer-to-farmer assistance between the United States and developing countries to assist in increasing food production and distribution and improving the effectiveness of the farming and marketing operations of farmers;
- (2) Utilize United States farmers; agriculturalists; colleges and universities, including historically black colleges and universities and land grant universities, and foundations maintained by colleges or universities; private agribusinesses; private organizations or corporations, including grassroots organizations with an established and demonstrated capacity to carry out such a bilateral exchange program and nonprofit farm organizations to work in conjunction with farmers and farm organizations in such countries, on a voluntary basis, to facilitate the improvement of farm and agribusiness operations and agricultural systems in such countries, including animal care and health, field crop cultivation, fruit and vegetable growing, livestock operations, food processing and packaging, farm credit, marketing, inputs, agricultural extension, and the strengthening of cooperatives and other farmer groups;
- (3) Transfer the knowledge and expertise of United States agricultural producers and businesses, on a people-to-people basis, to such countries while enhancing the democratic process by supporting private and public agriculturally related organizations that request and support technical assistance activities through cash and in-kind services;
- (4) To the extent practicable, enter into contracts or other cooperative agreements with or make grants to private voluntary organizations, cooperatives, land grant universities, private agribusiness,

or nonprofit farm organizations to carry out this section (except that any such contract or other agreement may obligate the United States to make outlays only to the extent that the budget authority for such outlays is available pursuant to subsection (c) or has otherwise been provided in advance in appropriation Acts);

(5) Coordinate programs established under this section with other foreign assistance activities carried out by the United States; and

6) To the extent that local currencies can be used to meet the costs of a program established under this section, augment funds of the United States that are available for such a program through the use of foreign currencies that accrue from the sale of agricultural commodities under this Act, and local currencies generated from other types of foreign assistance activities, within the country where the program is being conducted.

(b) Special Emphasis on Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Basin countries.

(1) Findings. --Congress finds the following:

(A) Need exists for the training of farmers in Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Basin countries in farming techniques that are appropriate for the majority of eligible farmers in such countries, including standard growing practices, insecticide and sanitation procedures, and other farming methods that will produce increased yields of more nutritious and healthful crops.

(B) African-American and other American farmers, as well as banking and insurance professionals, are a ready source of agribusiness expertise that would be invaluable for farmers in Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Basin countries.

6.4 Contractors' Reports: Executive Summaries

Full reports from each contractor have been shared with the implementers of the FtF Program and are available from the USAID/W Office.

Evaluation Report of the Caucasus Farmer-to-Farmer Consortium Program ACDI/VOCA, Land O' Lakes, and WINROCK INTERNATIONAL

Rodney J. Fink^e
12/07/2002

Executive Summary: The Farmer-to-Farmer Consortium Program in the Caucasus (Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan) was evaluated during November and December 2002. The program is administered by ACDI/VOCA with sub-contractors WINROCK INTERNATIONAL and LAND O' LAKES. On-site visits to each country took place between November 5 and 25, 2002. Contacts with over fifty entities (hosts companies, private farmers, consortium members, private businesses and collaborating donor organizations) were made during the in-country visits. FtF volunteer experts (two-hundred and eleven covering the evaluation period) worked in private enterprises (71%), organizations and NGOs (19%) and credit and finance institutions (20%). Program work in each country is carried out by an in-country staff of five to seven employees and the oversight supervision of an ACDI Regional Director (housed in Azerbaijan) who spends about one-third of his time in Georgia and Armenia. The in-country staff handles the management of the project and the implementers are to be commended on their accomplishments in developing local leadership.

Three to four volunteer expert resumes are provided for each proposed opening and with input from local staff and the host, a selection is made. WINROCK (three per year to each country) experts are managed in country the same as ACDI/VOCA experts. In Georgia and in Armenia, LAND O' LAKES volunteers are managed by ACDI/VOCA in country; whereas, in Azerbaijan, LOL volunteers are generally programmed to LOL projects in the country (generally hazelnuts and dairy). Management of volunteers in country is generally with an ACDI/VOCA staff (or contract employee) that serves as translator and expert (sometimes driver) in carrying out the expert's role. Baseline data of each project is obtained prior to arrival of the volunteer and at selected intervals after the volunteer expert returns home (generally six months and one-year). From the baseline and follow-up data obtained, the measurement of economic impact is possible. Data from one hundred and one volunteers in Armenia and Azerbaijan revealed an increase in sales (up 24 % over base), revenues (up 40%) and new jobs generated (up 5%).

USAID Missions (Country Coordinator in Azerbaijan) were contacted and in Azerbaijan and Georgia, there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the work being done by FtF volunteers. In Georgia, the Mission Personnel visited offered nothing negative about the FtF program but felt it was outside their area of interest. The subject of communications was discussed (especially in

^e Rodney J. Fink, a contract employee of Louisiana State University was in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia doing an on-site evaluation between November 5 and November 25, 2002

Georgia) and suggestions for a mission contact to be the distributor of FtF information (only electronic submissions) might be useful. In Armenia, an employee of the USAID Mission spent one day accompanying the evaluation process.

Hosts of FtF experts were very positive about the experiences and knowledge gained from experts. Many examples of new technologies were given (such as introducing jerky in a sausage plant) which were attributed to FtF experts. Hosts were often still in contact with FtF experts and continued to generate new processes through this continued relationship. Market chain sector programs were assisting sectors (such as food processing) and often ask for volunteer expert help with contacts with farmers for production needs and specialized needs such as forward contracting or leasing. The use of the market chain appears to be effective and a technique that should utilize a significant percentage of FtF resources in the region (fifty to seventy-five percent). The creation and nurturing of local companies such as Horizon Seeds, in Georgia, VISTAA in Armenia and credit companies in Azerbaijan and Georgia were very effective and should be continued. Numerous examples of FtF expert examples are described in the report. The evaluator suggests that future contracts consider providing some “discretionary funding” for demonstration works that would support a number of projects. The safety of volunteer experts is discussed and guidelines for automobile safety should be established (including speed and seat belts).

The program in the Caucasus is a very strong program and much of the success is a result of strong country staff involvement. Country staffs carry out all of the major planning and decision making of day-to-day activities and do a good job. The ability of a good reporting system, that is established prior to a volunteer’s visit and updated periodically after the visit, enables the collection of data demonstrating the fiscal impact that volunteers have had on country programs.

FtF GENERAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUB SAHARAN AFRICA^f

Overall FtF is performing very well in the 3 countries visited in Africa (Nigeria, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe). Considerable effort goes into identifying suitable volunteer assignments, including connecting with host organizations (HOs) and partners that provide contexts in which volunteers can be used effectively. The details and logistics of volunteer assignments are managed quite efficiently as is essential for short term visits of this type. Considerable attention is given to developing and updating strategies for individual (and groupings of) HOs and to networking with other projects and organizations (public, private, NGOs) that can provide complimentary services to HOs. These complimentary services (e.g. access to credit, improved technologies, market information) are often essential to the utility and eventual impacts of the training and advisory services provided by volunteer. Volunteer can outline processes and provide information on specific improvements (e.g. alternative technologies); and provide training on their use, but at best this assistance is available only periodically and is not an adequate substitute for continuous interactions between producer groups and, for example, sources of information on improved techniques and markets. Grass roots organizations often have limited capacity to arrange for such complimentary services and in the absence of other partners (NGOs, projects, government agencies, etc), the burden of making the necessary connections and arrangements can fall upon FtF or simply not happen. This reality has significantly cost implications and is a critical consideration in determining the extent to which FtF chooses to work directly with grass roots organizations or via strategic partners who can assist.

The quality of the volunteer recruited appears to be generally high and in line with the requirements of the specific assignments. The advice and training provided is universally appreciated. The mere presence of the volunteer often has a significant catalytic effect upon HOs they work with. While it is not difficult to second guess some of the recommendations in the trip reports of individual volunteer, nearly all the suggestions are reasonable, reflecting a suitable mix knowledge and common sense. From the perspective of the PVO field staff and the HOs, the recruitment processes for volunteer is a stunning success. Among the few problems noted were difficulties in communication (hearing, accents) in the case of some of the older volunteers in particular. Volunteer tend to raise expectations, possibly to unrealistic levels in some instances, and is noted above FtF alone has limited capacity to provide essential follow-up. Again, this argues rather strongly in favor of working with and through partners who can help with the targeting and follow-up to V assignments.

Most volunteer are first timers, often with limited previous exposure to developing countries. There are also a significant number of volunteer that have carried out 2 or more assignments and/or have relevant experience in developing areas and agricultural development. The “professional” volunteers appear to be generally more effective in relating their specific tasks to the context of the specific HOs they are working with and the country/sector in general. They may be more sensitive to the need for making connections and knowledgeable about where to start looking, factors which are

^f Note prepared by Elon Gilbert as a contribution to a general evaluation of the FtF program conducted by a 6-person team assembled by USDA on behalf of USAID. Nov. 2002. Comments welcome and can be sent to elonsm@aol.com.

critical to achieving impact and sustainability. The contextual knowledge and connections to complimentary services might be provided by a partner organization and first time volunteer might be used most effectively where there is such a strategic partner.

The success of FtF to date owes much to the skills, initiative and hard work of the PVO staff in the region, most of who are citizens/residents of the country/region. Interactions with USAID missions have been quite positive in most instances. There is scope for improvement in several areas, including the development of country/regional strategies aimed at improving FtF contributions to mission and USAID Strategic Objectives (SOs), cost effectiveness, impact assessment, and the participation of HOs and partners in planning and facilitating volunteer assignments, as the consultants full report.

The following include the major recommendations for consideration in the development of the RFA:

1. **Paradigm:** The RFA should include, at least in summary form, the operative paradigm for the next round of FtF. I favor a statement that gives prominence to increasing the contribution FtF can make to development and impacts on livelihoods, but also featuring other areas (women, environment) and stressing the flexibility and innovative potential of FtF to explore new areas. FtF should work more closely with USAID country missions, but preserve its unique character. PVOs should be asked to spell out their perspectives on this in their submission.
2. **Target Group(s):** As far as efforts to improve agricultural/agribusiness productivity, I favor having the work of volunteers focus on the commercial agriculture sub sector and small farmers and groups committed to agriculture, rather than having them try to reach the poorest of the poor who are doing their best to leave agriculture. Programs serving the latter group might include a dimension of how to successfully diversify out of agriculture, rather than converting them to commercial farmers. This will be seen by some as a diversion from a focus on poverty reduction, but is line with prevailing thinking (ref J. Berdeque and G. Escobar (2001) Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems in Poverty Reduction. AKIS/ART Discussion Paper, World Bank.). Dealing with hard-core rural poverty requires a range of inputs that go way beyond what FtF can provide. The comparative advantage of FtF volunteers is helping the not so poor.
3. **Priority themes versus exploratory areas:** I favor about a 50/50 split of volunteer assignments between exploratory/innovative areas and priority themes/SOs, but don't think this needs to be written in stone. PVOs should be asked for their views in their submissions.
4. **Strategic Partners:** FtF programs should seek to partner with other organizations to provide complimentary inputs. The potential for such partnerships should be a major consideration in the determination of all volunteer assignments and particularly the selection of priority themes.
5. **Third Country Volunteers:** FtF program should explore partnering with other organizations that can supply volunteers from third countries where one is likely to find important complementary skills (e.g. South Asia, Latin America).
6. **Technological Change/ICT:** Most (all?) FtF project strategies should feature technological change, innovation in production/marketing and improved use of ICT. In addition to a series of country level strategic partners in priority theme areas, consideration might be given to a

general agreement with the IARCs to provide facilitating services in support of a portion of the FtF volunteers in the areas of improved technologies and ICT. This is already in effect in Nigeria with IITA and Winrock to some degree. Consideration to developing (or identifying) websites, CD roms with info on special theme areas in which vols are serving (eg. Bee keeping, cooperatives). PVOs to comment on this in their submissions.

7. ***Monitor, Evaluation and Impact Assessments:*** The utility of ME&I systems can be improved as discussed in my note on this subject. More emphasis on what is needed for decisions on starting, continuing, or terminating a project. Less emphasis on long-term impact monitoring, especially after the termination of FtF involvement.
8. ***More communication between implementing PVOs:*** USAID might consider leading off the next round with one or more workshops aimed at improving communications among implementing PVOs, particularly if there are going to be some new faces. Subjects might include use of partners, ME&I, allocation of volunteers between priority themes and exploratory areas, use of advisory committees at the country level, relations with USAID country missions and other donors, etc. The RFA might ask respondents for their ideas on this.
9. ***Grant funds:*** A small amount of grant funds might be provided in the PVO contracts to assist with follow up activities relating to volunteer assignments. However, these should be quite limited and might be provided by the USAID missions. In general, complimentary inputs/follow up activities should be supported by partner organizations, rather than by the PVOs out of FtF funds. The more FtF operates with strategic partners as opposed to directly with grass roots organizations, the less likely the need for supplementary grant funds will be an issue.
10. ***Volunteer performance/contracts:*** Consideration should be given to having volunteers sign formal contracts indicating their responsibilities in terms of reporting.
11. ***Cost sharing:*** PVOs should routinely explore the possibility of having host organizations and particularly strategic partners share in the costs of the volunteers. Ability to share in costs should be a factor in decisions on volunteer allocations and particularly in decisions on partner organizations for priority theme areas.
12. ***Potential and trade offs for improving the cost efficiency of FtF programs:*** Respondents should be asked for their suggestions in this area.

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Evaluation

Field Report: Haiti and Jamaica

Report prepared by Eric Benschoter as team member for evaluation of the Farmer-to-Farmer Program.

Executive Summary

Program Background

Field observations for the Caribbean regional activities of the Farmer-to-Farmer Program (FtF) were completed from November 2 - November 17, 2002. The evaluator met with nine host organizations in Haiti, where Partners of the Americas has completed 37 assignments with approximately 20 hosts. Projects focused mainly on commodity specific sectors seeking to increase production, improve varieties, increase value-added processing, and introduce new technologies. Volunteers assisted in apiculture, peanut and pigeon pea production, small garden fruits and vegetables, bamboo cultivation, and rabbit rearing.

In Jamaica, Land O'Lakes International runs the program with an average of 15 volunteer assignments completed annually since 1997. Due to a major program shift in 2000, the evaluation focused on nine hosts receiving assistance in the last two years. Since 1997, Land O'Lakes has worked with 56 host organizations in Jamaica and the Windward Islands. Volunteers assist a variety of hosts including industry associations, small-scale "cottage industry" producers and processors, small farmer cooperatives and individual entrepreneurs. Program activities focus on non-traditional agriculture and seek to increase local market access, including tourist resorts, as well as addressing export potential.

The majority of the populations of both these Caribbean nations consist of small-scale, subsistence level farm families. Many face the same obstacles of poor infrastructure, lack of government services, devastating droughts or storms, declining tourist markets and dissolving trade barriers that force them out of viable competition for export markets. Haiti is the worst-case scenario with practically no tourist industry, poor roads, daily electrical blackouts and very little capacity for export-quality production.

Sector Approach and Impact

Sector level analysis is difficult when poorly performing economies such as these are coupled with constant political upheavals that so often destroy years of progress within an industry. FtF implementers have done a commendable job at using the flexibility of short-term technical assistance to maximize the impact of a volunteer in a given sector. In Haiti for example, a new high-performance peanut variety is spreading to producers who have benefited from FtF training. As a staple of the Haitian diet, most small farmers grow peanuts. By training 55 members of one peasant community association, the higher yielding variety is beginning to reach the other 5000 producers in the region.

Sector analysis can also take a back seat to established relationships when field staffs are developing new assignment scopes. Building on past relationships, regardless of sector implications is often the easiest and most cost effective way of fielding volunteers. Research is minimal, baseline data on the

host is already complete and recruiters can rely more on familiar faces and skill needs. However, networking and maintaining relationships with host organizations is also a reliable source of sector level data, especially if those relations are established through Missions, Ministries or large umbrella associations. These groups often have the capacity to fund research or maintain databases for members and constituents.

Impact Monitoring and Results Reporting

Since USAID requested a restructuring of results reporting requirements in 2000, nearly all FtF implementers have completed adaptations to their M&E systems. Land O'Lakes has developed a database with the capability of storing all impact data collected in the field, while simultaneously sharing data across the network between HQ and field staff. This technology has recently saved the field office in Jamaica from massive data loss due to a virus attack.

The quality of impact data relies heavily on strong host relations and the interviewing skills of field staff. Partners' system in Haiti is more rudimentary, but effective. The part-time staff there has been well trained and maintains the trust of all host organizations interviewed. His language proficiency in Creole, French, Spanish and English allows for greater accuracy of data collection, more cost efficient reporting, and the ability to quickly disseminate best practices to any Latin American, Caribbean or African country where Partners operates.

USAID Mission Coordination

The broad range of Farmer-to-Farmer activities allows the program to fit logically in countries where the USAID Missions may not even have an Agricultural Strategy. In Jamaica, the Mission feels that FtF contributes to its environmental strategy, which includes conservation, improved cultivation practices, land management and pest control. In both countries, Mission interest in FtF activities varies, however Mission involvement and tracking of the program is generally minimal, with perhaps one Agriculture or Economic Growth Officer reviewing annual reports and work plans. Implementers meet rather infrequently with Mission staff and Mission Directors have little or no knowledge of the program. This relationship does not seem unfavorable to either the Mission or the implementer.

Peace Corps Collaboration

Formal collaboration with Peace Corp at U.S. HQ level was a bust. However, there are many examples of successful informal partnering in the field, working through the local office. This would seem to be the favorable modus operandi for FtF and Peace Corps. This may also be improved upon by signing MOU's in the field, creating a more formal relationship at the local level. This would ensure periodic performance review on the part of Peace Corps, as well as creating a more systematic approach that would not rely so heavily on staff personalities.

Value-Added Volunteering

Though cost effectiveness of the program remains an issue, the volunteer nature of the FtF technical assistance brings with it benefits to Hosts that often reach beyond agriculture into community services development. In Haiti there is a complete lack of infrastructure and government provided services. Therefore, many agricultural producer associations that FtF works with often provides to

their members and their communities basic services that are otherwise lacking. For example, many hosts fund schools and other education programs, as well as health and hygiene training and/or services, adult literacy, and road construction. FtF provides “value-added volunteering” that impacts these peripheral areas by strengthening the associations. Volunteer projects also increase the incomes and working capital of the host organizations, allowing them greater freedom to expand services. In addition, volunteers often continue their support years after they travel. In one example a volunteer raised funds to purchase school uniforms for children, whose school had benefited from several small farm and animal rearing projects.

Recommendations

1. **It is clear that farmers and other hosts often need additional resources in order to fully implement the recommendations of the FtF volunteer.** The cost effectiveness of this program should allow for a built-in funding mechanism to maximize impact of volunteer TA. Organizations should be encouraged to build this mechanism into their next proposals.
2. **Longer-term follow-up should be a goal of program M&E.** It is important for implementers to capture impact beyond the initial impact survey. If contact with a host is not regularly maintained, it is likely that monitoring of that host’s progress will also go unrecorded.
3. **In most instances, FtF works best when run by full-time experienced field staff.** Part-time or volunteer staffs have also proven to be effective, however burnout or turnover under that management structure seems more likely. Working solely through an NGO partner has proven problematic. Often the priorities of the NGO will supercede FtF program priorities.
4. **Highlight networks and linkages.** FtF forges linkages between groups and individuals who otherwise may never have had an opportunity to collaborate. This can increase regional benefits within a country. Many of the complex relationships that FtF volunteers and staff facilitate are not recognized or captured by staff in the annual reports.
5. **Maximizing volunteer reach and effectiveness.** Some analysis on balancing the volunteer's time in country between multiple hosts would be beneficial.
6. **Peace Corp partnership works best at the field level.** Collaboration has worked well through informal relationships with the local PC office.
7. **Program adaptability must be kept in check.** The short-term nature of FtF TA makes the program highly adaptable. Grantees must exercise caution when implementing programmatic changes to avoid dropping a host or activity too quickly in favor of new opportunities. Good program management will find a balance between ending and continuing host relationships and seeking new organizations and project areas.

EVALUATION SUMMARY, OTHER FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS and COMMENTS

Report prepared by Wm. Maltby as team member for evaluation of the Farmer to Farmer Program. November 29, 2002

During the course of four weeks of field and office evaluation work I have been able to review most significant operating aspects of the FtF Programs being conducted in Russia, Ukraine, and Moldova. I approached the task from the standpoint of identifying the resource base available to apply to the Program; the management systems in place to effectively apply the resources; and reviewing the adequacy of the systems in place for monitoring and evaluation of results. The Programs in Russia are administered by ACDI/VOCA (A/V) and those in Ukraine and Moldova by CNFA (CN).

The FtF Programs in Russia and the West NIS are well established, are meeting objectives, and taken as a whole, are highly successful.

The FtF Program is a people intensive effort that incorporates differing approaches that have evolved to incorporate the needs of host organizations while utilizing the individual strengths and experience of the PVO participants. This success stems from the flexibility provided by the Cooperative Agreement, Prime and Sub-Contractor Relationships, and Consortium Agreements. Program directives are typically driven from PVO headquarters and vary from review and periodic input to detailed analysis of individual assignment sign-off. A motivated and professional local staff is the key to ultimate success.

Based on the 2003 work plan, AV will place 564 volunteers in Russia by the conclusion (9/03) of the Program. This represents 95% of the Program target of 592 volunteers. AV places emphasis on sector balance and stresses quality of assignments by using its experience to engage hosts with a high probability of generating measurable results.

The Russia the FtF Program is administered through a Consortium that includes: AV's Moscow 10+staff (one expat.); A 5 person (local staff) AV branch operation in Saratov; A sub-contractor agreement with Land O Lakes (LOL) for work in west central Siberia with a 5 person local staff in Novosibirsk, and a sub-contractor agreement with Winrock International (WI) to supply 21 volunteers per year.

AV purposely engages a wide variety of host individuals and organizations driven by its sector approach (livestock/poultry, dairy/eggs, finance, field crops, etc.) in 13 focused Oblast districts. Many of the assignments are directed toward specialized needs that can result in both immediate or future, sustainable impact. Many initial assignments result in a project orientation. In fiscal 2002, 81 AV host organizations received their first volunteer.

AV continues to focus volunteer assignments largely on Private Enterprises with 59% sent for this objective, while 32% worked with Organizations and NGO's; and 9% with Credit and Finance Hosts.

Based on its work plan CN, is planning to complete 75 volunteer assignments in Ukraine, during the final year of the Program. This will result in a total of 197 volunteers against the 4-year target of 220. In Moldova, CN plans to field 50 volunteers in FY 2003, which will result in a 4-year total of 136 against a target of 140. 18 volunteer assignments in Belarus will achieve the 4-year target of 40.

CN's three objectives for 2003 are to *Increase the income of private farmers by helping them to engage in group commercial activities; Strengthen private agribusinesses that contribute to the development of the private food economy and rural areas; and Increase access of private farmers and agribusiness entrepreneurs to credit by deepening the understanding of financial planning and management.*

CN principally accomplishes its objectives by establishing longer-term relationships with host organizations. In Ukraine volunteers will work with about 21 active project locations as well as private farmers and others; and in Moldova there are about 13 long-term projects underway. This approach is cost effective from the standpoint of project staff specialization. It requires that considerable up-front effort be put forth in analyzing the project candidates, and that the succession of volunteers to a particular project host continue to record progress toward a defined goal of project maturity. This approach does not exclude one time volunteer assignments to host organizations.

CN feels that single assignment training with a host organization usually results in low impact. It therefore is committed to long-term, multiple-volunteer projects. This enables CN to develop good relationships with the host organization, determine their strengths and weaknesses, and help them identify training objectives. Projects are designed such that each volunteer assignment builds on the one preceding it.

Strong In-Country staff is requisite to Farmer-to-Farmer Program performance.

Program flexibility has encouraged diversity in methods of Program administration, host identification, volunteer selection, and in the development of assessment criteria. Successful scope of work development and project monitoring require intensive work by a skilled and dedicated staff who have a good knowledge of the agricultural sector, general business management issues, and possess good inter-personal relationship skills.

Interaction and open communication between PVOs and Missions can result in better Program results and create opportunities for synergistic collaboration.

The three Mission offices in Russia and the West NIS displayed differing levels of interest in the FtF Program. The level of interest will vary dependent upon overall focus in agricultural projects, the breadth of Mission activities, and the experience and background of Mission officials.

The Missions are universally interested in the FtF Program and regularly meet with returning volunteers. More frequent, two-way communication is encouraged as both Mission and PVO objectives can periodically leverage results with a collaborative approach.

Program success can be effectively managed through various structures and agreements by leveraging human and other resources, and can create opportunities for additional PVOs and synergistic collaboration.

Sub-Contractor Agreements, Consortiums, and working Collaboration are effective methods to capture diversity of approach, leverage human and other resources, and create opportunities for new PVOs to become involved in the Farmer-to-Farmer Program.

The Consortium in Russia is working extremely well, with LOL and WI both fulfilling their objectives with oversight from AV. To the host, the relationship between the PVOs is transparent.

The three organizations work extremely well together with the overall focus on the assignment and the success of the volunteer activity. They discuss strategy and on a continuous basis and the host organizations do not distinguish one from another. LOL acknowledges that it could not operate well in Russia without the knowledge and capacity of AV

CN's identification of potential host organizations is proactive and includes participation in farmer exhibitions, field visits to other organizations that provide assistance to farmers, public outreach through newspapers, TV and radio, and partnerships with other foreign organizations involved in economic development such as Peace Corps, TACIS, and World Bank. CN feels that it possess a good understanding of local governments and business networks, local economies, and cultural aspects of Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus.

In West NIS, project managers identify and cultivate the hosts and the eventual long-term assignments. They closely identify with the host organization and continue to work with them throughout the project cycle that can extend for two or more years and involve multiple volunteer assignments. *This strategy implies continuous staff training and an awareness of evolving training and development needs, and the ability to move beyond the original focus when periodic analysis and circumstances indicate deviation from planned results.*

In Russia, project development specialists interact with business support organizations, institutes, associations, NGO's, focus groups, and local administrations to assist in development of host candidates.

In Russia and West NIS the FtF development needs are slowly evolving and require that the PVO determine the most appropriate host need from a possible array of developmental possibilities. To be successful in this environment, implementers and individual project managers must be able to work with different levels of host organizations and volunteers. This requires ongoing training, an awareness of conditions and possibilities, and the development of a system of contacts and marketing approaches that help support the PVO's overall goals. In this regard, overall program success is linked to PVO staff depth, motivation and diversity.

The use of a long-term project approach can limit the spread effect of development efforts to other sectors.

This methodology is driven primarily toward the achievement of measurable (objective) impact and results. It is efficient because project managers can become specialists in a relatively narrow development arena—such as training business methodology through training programs developed for delivery by local credit unions. The strategy can also be risky as not all credit unions (for example) will be able in 12 to 24 months to field a trainer or have the appropriate audience to advantage the training. A long-term (client) approach may lead to a more standardized needs/solution approach.

This approach would also appear to limit the exposure of the PVO to the broader spectrum of development opportunity. While the project coordinators would become expert within their specialty, they may not gain additional knowledge and abilities that are derived from a wider variety of assignments. Broader exposure most often results in improved awareness of development opportunity and community acknowledgment of broad form efforts that are tailored to highest development need.

The use of ‘proven’ volunteers can result in improved development effectiveness.

Proven volunteers offer increased efficiency, as they understand the cultural aspects and the absorptive capacity of host organizations. AV has fielded certain volunteers to numerous *new hosts* because they understand what works, how to adjust in mid-assignment if necessary, and they are fully familiar with logistical matters and cultural aspects. This allows AV to average almost 1.5 hosts per volunteer—thus leveraging costs and development benefits.

Latin America Executive Summary and Recommendations

Report prepared by Ira "Buck" Richards as team member for evaluation of the Farmer to Farmer Program.

From October 20 through November 13, 2002 the consultant visited Mexico, Nicaragua and Bolivia to evaluate the Farmer-to-Farmer program. The FtF implementers were Land O' Lakes (LOL) in Mexico, Partners for the Americas, Wisconsin Chapter, in Nicaragua, and ACDI/VOCA (A/V) and Partners for the Americas, North Carolina, Utah and Arkansas Chapters, in Bolivia.

The three implementers administer the FtF program using very different models.

The **Land O' Lakes** FtF program in Mexico is administered by two local NGOs on fixed price contracts. There have been 72 volunteer assignments with approximately 25 host organizations over the life of the project. The consultant was able to interview five host organizations. Program focus and selection of host organizations are determined by the NGOs; LOL recruits volunteers in response to requests from the NGOs on behalf of their clients. The NGOs are short-staffed and under-funded, and use personal or borrowed space, phones, computers, and vehicles which has hampered their ability to promote the program, identify new projects/hosts, support the volunteers in the field, and fulfill reporting/M&E requirements. Nevertheless, the LOL FtF Mexico program has enjoyed remarkable success. FtF administrative funds played a critical role, permitting the NGOs to provide FtF host organizations with on-going technical and organizational support, which has facilitated adoption of recommendations by FtF volunteers and created the opportunity for leveraging significant funding/material support from other entities.

The certification, production and marketing of organic products by the Maya Indian communities with which the NGOs are working have been a central theme of the LOL FtF program. Organic wheat and coffee producers in Chiapas, and organic cacao and chocolate producers in Tabasco have been able to take advantage of the increasing demand for organic products and are selling their production at premium prices. All the host organizations interviewed felt that they had benefited from the series of FtF volunteer interventions, though sometimes the impact was hard to quantify.

The USAID/Mexico Environment Program Team Leader commented that the implementer had not consulted with the Mission on strategic objectives or FtF work plans, but that he felt that there were opportunities to fit FtF activities into the mission environment strategic objectives concerned with bio-diversity conservation and global climate change. The Environment Project Officer highly praised the NGOs' accomplishments, but felt that opportunities for collaboration had been missed.

Returned volunteers contacted by the consultant were generally happy with their scopes of work and orientation. They said that their stays had been well organized and that they had received good support from the NGOs. All felt that they had made a positive contribution, and a majority said that they had participated in some form of outreach after returning home.

The NGOs implementer model functions, but has some drawbacks. The fixed price contract may serve as a disincentive to identify new hosts, and accurate monitoring and evaluation of weak projects would not necessarily be high priorities for contracted NGO implementers wed to those projects and interested in maintaining the useful financial arrangement.

Partners for the Americas--The individual US state Partners chapters in collaboration with their counterpart country/city Partners chapters in Latin America and the Caribbean execute FtF programs in Nicaragua and Bolivia. The state chapters recruit and orient volunteers for projects jointly elaborated with the counterpart chapter. Volunteer or part-time in-country coordinators assisted by the agricultural committees of the local Partners chapters do host identification, volunteer support and monitoring and evaluation.

Nicaragua and Bolivia are the largest of the 13 Partners FtF country programs, with 80 and 90 volunteer assignments, respectively; almost all volunteers assisted multiple host organizations on one assignment each. The organizations included artisans groups, livestock producers associations, beekeepers associations, donor funded projects, and state agriculture and livestock research and extension institutes and universities. The consultant was able to interview 14 collaborating/host organizations in Nicaragua and 8 in Bolivia.

More than half of the Partners volunteers came from their respective State Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service and state universities; the rest were mostly farmers and other agricultural professionals. Both the Nicaragua and Bolivia FtF programs had a target of 10 volunteers per year, but have fielded considerably more. It was apparent in conversations with representatives of collaborating organizations that the demand for volunteers is far greater than that.

The FtF program has had a significant impact on the incomes of many of the host organizations in Nicaragua and Bolivia. Dairy farmers, beekeepers, trout farmers, and swine producers have particularly benefited. Because the FtF program often collaborated with producer associations and agricultural development projects that were simultaneously introducing other improved practices, it is not easy to measure the economic impact of specific FtF interventions. In Nicaragua, however, multiple FtF volunteer assignments assisting dairy coops led to improved milk quality, which enabled coops to negotiate a 20% higher base price for raw milk from the major milk buyers. This higher base price was estimated to have generated \$3,375,000 in additional income for all dairy producers in the most important milk-producing region of the country.

The USAID/Nicaragua Rural Development Projects Officer felt that the FtF program was effectively addressing mission strategic objectives, but wanted closer collaboration. The USAID/Bolivia Acting Agricultural Officer was less favorably disposed toward the Partners FtF program, preferring that of ACDI/VOCA, which he considered more market, driven, and in closer agreement with mission strategic objectives.

Almost all of the FtF volunteer respondents to the consultant's questionnaire were more than satisfied with the support they had received from the state and country chapters and felt that their volunteer assignments had been successful. They almost universally maintained contact with their hosts, offering technical consultation and frequently, material assistance. Long-standing relationships between hosts and volunteers occurred more frequently with the Partners model. Approximately 70% of Partners volunteers said that they had participated in some kind of outreach after their return home.

The Partners FtF implementer has effectively utilized the broad technical resources at its disposal in the Partners chapters. The level of activity from country to country is dictated by the degree of commitment of the local chapter, and the level of involvement and breadth of experience of the stateside counterpart chapter. Success depends largely on the personal sacrifice of the exceptional individuals who serve as country FtF volunteer/part-time coordinators. Adequate compensation for time spent on FtF business and basic office infrastructure could make the system more resilient and results more consistent.

ACDI/VOCA maintains a country office with a US and Bolivian staff. FtF is one of several projects implemented by the full-time staff, the costs of which are shared by the sometimes complementary and separately funded projects. The A/V country staff invites application by beneficiary organizations for volunteer technical assistance and supports volunteers in the field. Volunteers are recruited by both the US and Bolivian offices from the 7,000 member A/V volunteer database. Demand for FtF volunteer services appears to far exceed the number of volunteers, which can be fielded under the present budget. Demonstrable success has resulted from employing a competent professional staff and a well-structured process. There have been approximately 135 volunteer assignments and 70 beneficiary organizations over the life of the program. The FtF volunteers have provided assistance to a wide range of hosts, including producers associations and coops, agribusiness, food processors, agricultural extension and research institutions, universities, municipal and departmental governments, handicraft associations and NGOs.

Because of the great demand for volunteer technical assistance, A/V is very selective in choosing beneficiary organizations; an important criterion is how well they fit the USAID/Bolivia strategic objectives. Although some hosts have had four or five volunteer assignments, most have had fewer. They tend to be entities which are either self-supporting or have funding and/or on-going technical assistance from international donors or the Bolivian government; rarely are they organizations without financial resources. The ACDI-VOCA Country Representative estimates that because of the rigorous selection process 90% of volunteer assignments have had excellent or good impact.

The consultant was able to interview 8 beneficiary organizations, amongst others, a natural cosmetics manufacturer, an association of handicraft cooperatives, an association of organic cacao and cocoa producers coops, an association of onion producers, a regional seed certification committee, and a producer of agricultural bio-regulators. All but two of the interviewed host organizations had had multiple FtF volunteers; all were very appreciative of the technical assistance they had received and felt that they had benefited significantly.

The consultant was present when ACDI-VOCA debriefed a highly qualified volunteer who had just finished an assignment. The debriefing was very thorough and detailed. The information taken and the scheduled follow-up interviews with the beneficiary would appear to give an accurate assessment of the impact of the volunteer intervention.

High percentages of ACDI-VOCA FtF volunteers had advanced degrees and spoke Spanish; ACDI-VOCA has used a higher percentage of “South-South” volunteers than any other implementer.

Those volunteers that responded to the consultant's questionnaire were very positive about their experience. Almost all said that they had had sufficient time to transfer the technology they had come to teach and that they felt they had made a positive impact, though they couldn't always be sure that their recommendation were followed because the relationship terminated after their return. Some of the volunteers continued in direct contact with the beneficiary organization, advising on technical matters and occasionally providing technical materials, but communication was often difficult, especially when there wasn't a common language.

All of the volunteer respondents enthusiastically supported the renewal of the Farmer-to-Farmer program; however, only about 30% of ACDI-VOCA FtF volunteer respondents said that they had participated in any kind of outreach activities after their return home.

The USAID/Bolivia Agricultural Officer had only high praise for the ACDI-VOCA FtF program. He estimated that 60 to 75% of ACDI-VOCA FtF volunteer assignments fit USAID/Bolivia's strategic objectives. He was very complimentary about the volunteers' reports, copies of which he received from ACDI-VOCA in Spanish and English. He characterized the reports as "professional" and said that they were very useful. He would like to see more use of FtF volunteers on USAID projects to reduce the cost of TA. He indicated a strong preference for interventions that have significant economic impact.

The ACDI-VOCA FtF program results are impressive. The ME & I system is well designed and appears to give a fairly accurate assessment of volunteer impact. The benefits of a permanent presence and full-time professional staff are demonstrable. The only criticism, and it is minor, would be that because of the nature of the assignments many of the ACDI-VOCA FtF volunteers tend work more with technicians and managers than ordinary farmers, and the volunteers are consequently more like consultants, diminishing the "people to people" character of the Farmer-to-Farmer program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Although the Partners model has had very impressive results, reliance on unpaid host-country volunteers for Farmer-to-Farmer country office infrastructure, support of FtF volunteer, and the process of project identification, elaboration, and evaluation, is a heavy burden, is probably unsustainable in the long run, and can curtail effectiveness of the FtF program;
- The use of sub-contracted NGOS for execution of FtF program has also had notable success, though the NGOS required assistance to meet reporting requirements and there was little or no incentive to identify new hosts in addition to the organizations that the NGOS were already working with;
- Land O' Lakes and Partners of the Americas could improve program management and enhance impact of volunteer interventions by investing in minimal necessary in-country infrastructure and employing/compensating local staff. Relying wholly on under-funded sub-contracted NGO's (LOL) and volunteer or part-time coordinators (Partners) who are obliged to use personal or borrowed space, phones, computers, and vehicles, limits the capability of in-country staff to promote the program, identify new hosts, support the volunteers in the field, and fulfill reporting/MI&E requirements;

- Implementers could better address mission SO's if there were formal procedures for discussion of possible areas of action and collaboration with the AID mission prior to preparation of implementers' annual work plan, rather than simply submitting of work plan after the fact for mission review and comments, the current practice for some of implementers;
- Direct University-to-University linkages have grown out of volunteer assignments and have resulted in proposals for joint projects and research, and exchange of professors and students, all of which could complement the FtF program and have a beneficial impact on the agricultural sector in general. Because of funding limitations of both northern and southern institutions, few of these proposals have been implemented. These linkages could be more fruitful and expanded upon if the US institutions could be assisted in identifying possible sources of funding;
- The Partners N-S chapters offer unique opportunities, which should be exploited more fully. State chapters already assist southern coordinators and agriculture committees in elaboration of volunteer scopes of work. Activities such as elaboration of complementary project proposals, joint N-S bilingual web pages with translated volunteer reports, and electronic links to volunteers through Spanish speaking intermediaries to facilitate further consultation by host/clients should all be considered;
- When successful volunteer interventions create opportunities for separately funded projects, the implementers' home offices should be prepared to assist Partners' in-country chapters or ngo implementers in elaboration of proposals for complementary projects, and help find funding;
- There should be a discretionary fund administered by the FtF coordinator or country office for expenses of demonstration plots, field day expenses, etc., including transportation of participants to course/field day sites, so that volunteer can address larger groups, rather than fragment volunteer time amongst numerous groups;
- Where appropriate, in-country offices should have means and technical expertise to follow up volunteer interventions and promote adoption of introduced technologies, in addition to the established responsibilities of program promotion, host identification, scope of work preparation, volunteer support and impact assessment;
- There should be sufficient flexibility in budget and country volunteer quotas to respond to unforeseen need for specific expertise, and streamlining of volunteer recruitment process to shorten lag time from need identification to fielding of volunteer.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Field Report: Anthony Johnson
Central Asian Republics

Program Management

Winrock International (WI) is the lead PVO institution in the Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF) Consortium in the Central Asian Republics (CARs), where FtF activities currently are implemented in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Other PVO members of the Consortium include: ACIDI/VOCA, with assignments in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic; Land o' Lakes (LOL) fielding assignments in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; and Mercy Corps International (MCI) working in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Volunteers for Tajikistan are also fielded in partnership with the Tajik Technological University.

The Winrock International FtF management structure is efficient, effective and creative in the CARs. The program is managed by three ex-pats who are absolutely critical to continued successful management of the program. FtF staff in Turkmenistan, though relatively isolated, has performed particularly well. During the last three years, volunteers fielded from that office have leveraged and organized more than US\$1,000,000 from American institutions and agri-business firms for training of Uzbeks and Central Asians. Continued oversight and management by Winrock Country Managers in Kazakhstan and in Uzbekistan is imperative to maintain high quality and impact oriented programs in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, respectively.

Regions and Sub-Sectors

Winrock and its partner's field professional volunteers in potentially 'high impact' sub sectors such as dairy, honey, potato and mushroom production, small enterprise establishment, rural credit and the banking sector through training (ACIDI/VOCA). Technical assistance from the FtF Program has achieved a high level of impact and will have more in the near-term.

Winrock has done some work in marketing of agricultural products in Uzbekistan, most notably rice, but little else in the other Central Asian Republics. Marketing of agricultural products in the NIS is problematic at best, but perhaps there are 'firsts' being made in Russia or possibly in the Ukraine, which can be adapted to the CAR. ACIDI/VOCA is likely to be involved in any marketing work being done in the NIS and could be the first institution to begin free-market work in the CAR with FtF technical assistance either within the framework of a larger program or by itself. Stockpiled wheat in Kazakhstan may be a starting point for such technical expertise.

The FtF Program in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan has begun work in zero-tillage technologies adapted for soil and water conservation. This is particularly important in the promotion of sustainable natural resource management practices that increase income and conserve valuable natural resources.

ACIDI/VOCA has been fielding volunteers in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic to work with the banking sector as well as community credit. The volunteers have been very successful in both

activities and the hosts are very appreciative of the technical support, however the program is not reaching the rural farmers and agribusinesses. Potential drawbacks to rural and agricultural lending stem from issues surrounding land redistribution from State to private ownership.

Relationships with USAID Missions and Other Partners

USAID Regional Mission Director, George Deikun had only just arrived in September 2002 in Kazakhstan as Central Asian Mission Director. He had visited the Turkmenistan FtF Program in the past and met with several successful hosts. He was less informed of the Kazakhstan FtF Program. Although the Mission Director recognized limited responsibility or oversight for FtF as a centrally funded program, he did not deny the possibility of future Mission buy-ins when confronted with the fact that in the next funding phase there would be less money available to NIS FtF in favor of expanding programs in Africa and the Caribbean.

FtF maintains close ties with CIMMYT's^g Central Asian Regional Mission in Almaty. This relationship was established through an FtF volunteer to Kazakhstan who was a wheat agronomist with CIMMYT. The program promotes no-till production techniques that can significantly lower production costs, increase yields and conserve soil and water resources, the. There is an opportunity to include FtF TA into the testing and transfer of soil and water conservation technologies to wheat farmers. The timing for international donors is perfect, just when first results of the FAO/CIMMYT zero-tillage project in Northern Kazakhstan are coming in and can serve as an estimate of the benefits to be accrued from the use of no-till technologies.

Winrock continues to partner with Kazakh Agrarian University and Tajik Technological University. Reminiscent of U.S. Land Grant Colleges and Universities, Winrock's FtF Program has established and currently supports new linkages among *research institutions, new private enterprises with a production focus and agricultural extension services*. This approach cuts across many sectors including mushroom production, potato processing, emu and ostrich rearing, and dairy. The Program has established technical guides for mushroom producers, milk producers, seed production, and soil and water conservation.

Future Challenges

Impact Monitoring. The FtF guidelines for impact assessment are being used and followed in the CARs but generally done so without a clear understanding of why they are used and consequently how to use them effectively. Much of the really pertinent information that the impact assessment guidelines are meant to pick up is not gathered. Even though the PVO implementers contributed to the design of these guidelines, their field staffs that have been given the responsibility of collecting the data have not received adequate training. Staff time is also limited.

Land Tenure. This continues to be problematic in most countries of the former Soviet Union. The Government of Kazakhstan had attempted to distribute land to former State and Communal Farm workers some years ago. Some resold their land in order to move out of the rural areas, while most

^g The International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center

farm workers sold or gave the land back to the original farm director with the understanding that work for family members would be available as in the past and that living conditions would be similar to past levels. The Farm Directors are the listed owners of these farms and they operate as large private enterprises for the most part, purchasing all inputs, paying the labor, providing housing for farm workers and of course, selling the production. Production of livestock and crops is split between the needs of the farm workers, livestock needs, and some (est. 40% on large farms with a primary livestock focus) is sold at local and national markets. Many of the farms in Ust Kamenogorost in the NE Region of Kazakhstan, have both irrigated cropland as well as non-irrigated pasture and dry land crops, mainly wheat.

Rural and agricultural credit. The bottleneck appears to be in the banking sector's continuing adjustment to a more market-oriented economy. The FtF Program is providing TA in credit lending and has been largely successful. One measure of this success or impact will be how quickly financial institutions are able to be established to provide credit in the agricultural sector, including production, marketing, processing and storage facilities, as well as for startup of rural enterprises and agribusinesses and their expansion.

Wheat and Grains Sector. Kazakhstan was the former Soviet 'breadbasket'. The cereal market has been swamped with Kazakh wheat and lacks any viable market mechanisms to get it to other NIS countries, or Chinese, Indian and Pakistani markets. Presently, 6 million metric tons of wheat is being stored in Kazakhstan from last year's harvest, because of viable market constraints. Technical assistance is needed in Kazakhstan to address market access and transport issues^h relating to cereals and other crops. FtF could potentially tap into international relief organizations working in emergency situations in Central Asia, to see if this huge stockpile of wheat in Kazakhstan could find a home. Addressing the cereals market bottlenecks through FtF technical assistance represents a sub sector with potentially huge impact in Kazakhstan and possibly Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan.

Environmental quality. This is a sore topic in Kazakhstan which served as one of the bases for the Soviet Space Program and where radiation from uranium²³⁵ may have accumulated in groundwater, soil and in edible crop biomass and in nearby livestock. The Aral Sea also represents an environmental disaster. The implications for the FtF Program and volunteer safety could be large. What can be expected from the FtF program in addressing these issues? Raising U.S. public awareness through returning volunteers may be the best and only response.

^h Conversation with Professor Muratbek Karabayev, CIMMYT CAR Liaison Scientist, on October 28, 2002.